







**THE LIFE**  
**OF THE**  
**REV. T. T. THOMASON, M. A.**









*Rev. J. J. Thomson.*

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# THE LIFE

OF THE

REV. T. T. THOMASON, M. A.

LATE CHAPLAIN TO THE HONOURABLE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

BY THE

REV. J. SARGENT, M. A.

RECTOR OF LAVINGTON.

Μηκέτι παπταίνων μεθ' ὁμήλικας ἀλλ' ἐπὶ ἔργῳ  
Θυμὸν ἔχων.

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MDCCCXXXIII.



## DEDICATION.

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TO THE REV. CHARLES SIMEON, M. A.

SENIOR FELLOW OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

MY DEAR FRIEND.

Allow me, without your knowledge and concurrence, to inscribe this memoir with your name. Honoured and beloved as it was by Mr. Thomason, the propriety of the inscription will be readily acknowledged. Other reasons influence me on this occasion. By you it was that many years ago, I was induced to prepare for the public a life of Henry Martyn. You again have now pressed upon me the present work, which, though like the former, inadequately executed, may prove, I trust, not wholly unac-

ceptable to the Church of Christ, nor through his aid unprofitable. To you above all, under God, it is mainly to be attributed, that I am able to appreciate the exalted principles which were the pole-star of those characters I have endeavoured to delineate. More than this, I will not say from respect to the delicacy of your feelings ; less I could not have said without injustice to my own.

I remain, my dear Friend,

Your most grateful and affectionate,

JOHN SARGENT.

LAVINGTON,

MARCH 20, 1833.

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# A MEMOIR.

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## CHAPTER I.

THE Rev. Thomas Thomason was born at Plymouth, the seventh of June, 1774; and until the fifth year of his age, lived under the care of a mother, who, within a year after his birth, became a widow. His father, for the purpose of augmenting a scanty income, left England for the West Indies; and, not long after his arrival there, was carried off by the fever so prevalent in that climate. His mother had intended to follow her husband to St. Vincents; but was doomed to shed the bitter tears of distress and desolation over the head of a fatherless child, whom it was her sole and anxious concern to nurse and educate. Circumstances affecting as these, rarely fail to heighten the reciprocations of fondness between parents and children: nor was this observation ever more fully verified than in the present instance.

Having left Devonshire for London, four years after her bereavement, Mrs. Thomason placed her son in a school at Greenwich, under the superintendence of Mr. Bakewell. There, to adopt her own words, ‘the affectionate care of one of the tutors over the spiritual instruction of one who was my world of happiness, was beyond all praise.’ For some time, nothing appeared in this boy, notwithstanding these Christian endeavours, beyond sweetness of temper, quickness of apprehension, docility, and diligence. ‘My views of happiness,’ he himself states, on a review of this period, ‘were those of my school-fellows, and never stretched further than a juvenile game, or the pleasure of spending a month every half-year with my friends.’

In his ninth year, a marked blessing descended on his tutor’s unremitting exertions, and he began to shew so much spirituality of feeling, and such decision of character, as to constitute this a distinct era in his life. ‘Frequent questions on the scriptures, and application of them to mankind and to himself, so affected him, that he saw himself to be a sinner, far from God and happiness, and he felt that his whole dependance must be on the mercy of God, through Christ.’ He thus describes the alteration in his sentiments and conduct; nor was change ever more clear. From scarcely knowing any joy beyond that of boyish

pastimes, he would then take pleasure in holding communion with Him who is invisible, during those intervals which were allotted to relaxation and amusement. . ‘ I began,’ (he writes). ‘ to find confidence in prayer: and, in proportion as I did so, happiness; and this happiness was so great, that I bore contempt without murmuring:’ for though Mr. Bakewell, and one of the other masters in this institution, favored whatever was excellent, the current of the school itself set strongly in an opposite direction. His correspondence with his mother also, young as he then was, bore immediate marks of his altered opinions; and, at length it issued—so wonderful are the ways, so marvellous the grace of God—in her maternal love and anxiety being largely repaid by lasting spiritual benefit. And, though of so tender an age, he was not without desires of one day becoming a minister. ‘ I longed,’ he says, ‘ to impart to others the happiness I felt myself.’

An extract from a letter, written soon after *his twelfth year*, will shew that the seeds of real religion, did not lie merely upon the surface of his mind, but had become radicated in his affections.

*October 9, 1786.*

‘ ——— Eternity!—what a word, when you consider it is eternity. I hope you and I, and our



parents and relations will be among the blessed. God is to be praised for his bountiful and everlasting goodness to us—it is bountiful, because he is good to us when we most want it; and everlasting, because he will never leave it off.—If you can—tell me of any love greater than offering up a Son for vile wretches,—if you can, tell me;—but it will be a hard thing for you to do it. What love! what amazing love!’

That classical studies had not been neglected, whilst the mind was raised to high and heavenly things, a distinction which at this time awaited him, affords abundant evidence. The Society for the encouragement of Arts and Sciences in the Adelphi, having offered a silver medal to that youth who could write and speak the best Latin, young Thomason entered the lists, and was pronounced the successful candidate.

The transition from the state of a scholar to that of a teacher, is rapid sometimes, and premature; it was so in the case of this youth; for at the age of *thirteen* we find him engaged in the work of tuition at Deptford. In this employment he continued till Midsummer 1789; when being a proficient in the French tongue, and Dr. Coke wanting an interpreter in that language, he was persuaded to accompany the Doctor in that capacity to the West Indies.

That this appointment was favorable in a pe-

cuniary point of view cannot be questioned, nor will those most alive to any evils incident to the Wesleyan system, deny that a young person witnessing what has been compared by Paley to the habits of the early Christians, was not devoid of many valuable aids to piety, though he might be exposed also to some disadvantages. As diseases generally seize upon the feeble and peccant part of the human frame, so is it with the mind. When its temperament is morbid, the infection of error is readily imbibed. One of this stamp, especially before a *full development of character*, would have been more ready to imitate defects than excellences. But the judgment of this youth, plastic as it might be supposed to be, was so solid, and his whole turn of thinking of so sober a cast, that he received nothing but unalloyed benefit from his temporary connexion with Dr. Coke.

In an account of his voyage to the West Indies, drawn up 'for his own improvement, and his mother's satisfaction,'—his every purpose and every action had some respect to her—we have these remarks, which, if like the letter quoted before, they occasionally betray the boy, do throughout exhibit the Christian.

'October 25, 1789.—As soon as we came to Greenwich, I could not help giving an affectionate farewell look to that place where I spent

so much time, and received those instructions of which I now reap the advantage.

‘ *Monday, 27.*—I spent a few heavenly moments in reading Mrs. Rowe’s *Meditations* and Dr. Watts’ *Poems*, I thought if my mother knew but half the spiritual happiness I felt, how would it cheer her spirit.

‘ *Friday, November 7.*—I cannot help pitying those who remain ill, (some of the missionaries,) Mr. — and —, but what a recompense will they receive when instruments in the hands of God, of converting many to righteousness. May God increase the desires *I already have of being an assistant in that blessed work, and effect the object of my desires.*

‘ *Saturday, 8.*—Wind still against us. I found myself peculiarly happy. I can pass over the Atlantic without fear: I have no reason to fear.

‘ *Sunday, 9.*—Was deep in thought to-day. Death presented itself to my imagination. This led me thoroughly to examine whether I was prepared for that solemn change. Stricken with shame, I fell on my knees, and if ever I prayed earnestly, I did then.

‘ *Tuesday, 18.*—A very tempestuous day. The ship rolls prodigiously. Take away from me, O Lord, the fear of dying.

‘ *Tuesday, 25.*—Was pensive during the day with regard to futurity, but being warned to take

no thought for the morrow, I desisted from further anxieties.

‘ *Thursday, December 4.*—This morning we came in sight of land. O, with what pleasure did I view the long-wished-for Barbadoes! With what extacy did I view the plains and mountains. O, that I may not forget God in the midst of my happiness. Surely, my dearest mother, you cannot help being sensible of my joy. Praise God with me for bringing me safe to Barbadoes, after a voyage of five weeks and four days.’

A youth between fifteen and sixteen in the West Indies, could want no topics of excitement by day or by night. The wonders of another hemisphere would not allow his curiosity and surprize a moment’s slumber. Cocoa-nut trees and humming-birds by day, fire-flies and musquitoes by night, were either his pleasure or amusement. But these obtained the least portion of his regard. Matters of higher interest rivetted his attention, and awakened his concern.

At St. Vincent’s he proceeds: ‘ We were hospitably received. Mrs. — was particularly kind to me, declaring she would make some little amends for my want of a mother, by doing all in her power to make me happy.

‘ *December 14.*—We set off on our way to the Caribbs. The Negro villages as we passed had a very odd appearance: they look like so many

brown heaps of dirt; they are made of straw, lightly thatched: they are wretched hovels, but the order in which they are built makes amends. We had a tremendous mountain to pass, so rugged we could not even lead our horses, till a company of Caribbs, the first we had met, lent us their cutlasses to cut open a way. After having passed this mountain, we came to a beautiful plain, seven miles long; this may be termed the Caribbean coast. Our route lay along the sandy beach, close to the sea shore. Here the Caribb children, all naked, met us by the hundred. The freedom they made with the boisterous ocean is astonishing; they would rush into it with all the composure imaginable; at the approach of a wave, they would dive under, and not appear till the raging billow had spent its force, when their fleecy locks would be seen again like so many little black rocks. Our astonished Caribbs seemed very glad to see us, and by their frequent and tender huzzas, welcomed us to their yet-unseen habitations. What struck me most was their warlike appearance; they all carried cutlasses, knives, and guns. They delighted me much by the generosity of spirit they possessed. Their savage look and warlike appearance, were made up by the simplicity and cheerfulness they manifested. They are docile. I heard two of them read

and spell, and the progress they had made astonished me.'

On their return from the Caribb country, which they left with much regret, they set sail for Dominica, where, after a tedious passage, they arrived December 19. Here the sight of the slave population called into painful action the passions of pity and righteous indignation in one to whom scenes of oppression being new were therefore the more revolting. He thus winds up his comments on the state of his degraded fellow-creatures. 'There is, it is true, *some* alleviation of their misery: they are not sensible of their unhappy condition; but this insensibility increases, or ought to increase, our compassion. How came they to be insensible of their condition? they were born so—How came they to be born so? Their parents were slaves, and so the genealogy proceeds till at last the unhappy creatures are found to have been torn from their native country, and deprived of friends and happiness.'

The following exhibition in Antigua proved a balm to christian feelings wounded deeply by the wrongs of humanity.

By noon we arrived at our destined place, where was a congregation of 1200 blacks. They were seated on benches on a small declivity. The Doctor stood on a chair under a shed, and preached to them on Phil. iii. 20. The negroes wept much.

Visiting the Dutch island of Eustatius, they encountered an edict worthy of the days of Dioclesian. This was its tenor:—If any white person shall be found praying with his brethren, for the first offence he shall be fined fifty pieces of eight; for the second, one hundred; for the third, he shall be whipped, his goods confiscated, and he banished. If a coloured person shall be found praying, for the first offence he shall receive thirty-nine lashes; for the second, he shall be fined, whipped, and banished: but if a slave, he shall be whipped every time.

Notwithstanding this atrocious law, it is delightful to know that the party were received into the house of one who was willing to risk his character and means of subsistence, out of love to his Saviour, and to those who appeared in his name. ‘Surely,’ said one of those who were received under his hospitable roof, ‘the Lord will prove his rock and shield, and will abundantly reward him in the day of accounts at the end of time.’ To the blacks who crowded about the house a sermon was delivered, on the text, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ;” but the preacher was soon obliged to quit the island.

From St. Kitt’s, whither they returned, they proceeded to Saba. This island was under Dutch government, but very different from that of St.

Eustatius. There all was kindness and cordiality, peace and loveliness. The neatness of the town and its beautiful regularity was an agreeable sight; it is built on a delightful terrace—screened on all sides from the winds by lofty mountains, except on the side opposite the seashore where it is exposed to the refreshing fannings of the breeze. The governor treated those who then visited the island most courteously; he himself, with the authorities of the place, attended the prayers and sermon in the evening, on which occasion many infants were brought for baptism, whose beauty seems to have made an impression similar to that of the English of old on the Romans. ‘They were of beauty such as we had not seen before—their color more angelic than mortal.’ Such is his description of Saba, and substantially no doubt it is correct, yet the vividness of the delineation may possibly have been heightened by unconscious reference to St. Eustatius, and by recollection of the countenance of the Caribbs and negroes.

After the tranquil and sacred delights of Saba—at Jamaica a sight was witnessed from the recital of which, making as it does part and parcel of a system of atrocity, one ‘turns for relief to some ordinary wickedness.’

‘We breakfasted at the plantation on balm tea and Indian bread, a repast at the best not very



agreeable. But how was my appetite lessened by what happened during the meal! The overseer had ordered a slave to walk our horse till we went away. He did so, and permitted him now and then to crop a mouthful of grass. The overseer observing him, called the under-overseer and ordered him a dozen lashes. Detestable cruelty! how did it shock my feelings. I could hear the whip resounding from afar, whilst the miserable sufferer gave a loud and heart-rending groan in the intervals of striking. I hastened to leave the hated spot, and my return was attended with as much melancholy as my departure was attended with pleasure.'

Of his merciful preservation from the deep before quitting Jamaica, we have this grateful and graphic recital :—

' We set off in our canoe to our brig with the intention of sailing that night; the evening was stormy and it was almost dark. The water was very rough—our canoe small. When about half way, I observed the water poured in with great violence. The wind and rain increased. The canoe was within three inches of being full: our consternation was great; and I firmly believe if the Keeper of Israel, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, had not been with us, I had not been now in existence,' By very great exertions, and baling out the water, they at length reached

their vessel. ‘We arrived,’ he says, ‘and praised the God of our salvation. And who such a God as he! The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. I hope I shall never forget his care over me while I live. My situation was as dangerous as possible; a boat almost full of water, loaded with men, striving against wind, rain, and sea. But “the waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee, and were afraid.” God supported us; he said to the sea, “Thus far shalt thou go, and no further.” The ocean obeyed the voice of its Almighty Sovereign. Did we feel ourselves sinking? Yes—and we felt God raising us up. Did we feel the watery bed open to receive us? We felt also a potent deliverer to protect. Praise the Lord, O our souls: while we live we will praise the Lord. As long as we have our being we will give thanks unto our God.’

Breathing a hope that his journal would not be unacceptable to his mother, for whom it had been prepared, he closes it thus—‘The keeper of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps: he hath watched over me and preserved me;—come then, expressive silence, muse his praise.’

## CHAPTER II.

IN tracing the course of individuals as well as nations, we should mark the springing of the original fountain and the influx of each tributary stream: and, above all, we should notice that which commands especial admiration—the concurrence of God's providence with his grace.

How he, whose life is before us, became acquainted with scriptural truth, we have heard: we are now to learn how the way was levelled for his admission into that sphere where, according to his earliest hopes and confirmed purposes, he was to impart to others the doctrines which he had learnt, experienced, and exemplified himself.

An honoured instrument in compassing this end was, a lady of the name of Thornton, to whom he became known soon after his return from the West Indies. Her affection for him was almost maternal. It was warm and unvaried; shining upon him with a steady lustre from the morning of his mature and active existence to the close

of her own declining days. And to this, like the statue in the rays of the rising sun, his soul was ever responsive in the deepest tones of ardent gratitude.

That sound discrimination was evinced in cherishing his inclination towards the ministry, will be conceded without difficulty. His remarks abroad are indications of a wisdom, at his age, by no means ordinary, and of a piety still more rare. The meekness and firmness he displayed under the ridicule of his school-fellows, shewed that he had not adopted notions only, but had become the recipient of vital principles. The mockery of associates, coming down on the head of a sufferer who ‘abates not a jot of heart or hope, but presses right onward,’ is no slight test of character. How little disposed he was to play the coward in the Christian warfare may be seen in a letter which he wrote at this time to a relation and cotemporary, with whom religion was a formal, cold, periodical exhibition, rather than a matter of heart-felt universal practice; armour to be laid up and gazed upon rather than a shield worn always on the arm. The questions he puts in reply to charges of excessive strictness, are so pertinent and pungent, they are plied so like a battery when the engineer had found the range, that it must have required no little dexterity to elude their force.

‘ You intimate that religion is not needful for us at all times. Going to church, prayers morning and evening, grace before and after meals, you observe, are all very well. You say you recommend going to church. Why so! ‘ May not a man stay away?’ You tell me, ‘ No.’ Permit me to ask your reason for so thinking ‘ Is it not because you think that you have a soul to save, a heaven to obtain; and that by so doing you will save your soul and obtain heaven. But is there not the same soul to be saved and the same heaven to obtain, in church and out of church, in doors and out of doors, in our business and out of our business: grant me this, and you must allow that devotion is necessary in church and out of church, in doors and out of doors, in your business and out of it; and that prayer is to be exercised, not only at particular times and places, but habitually, continually, always; because habitually, continually, always, we have a soul to save and a heaven to obtain.’

At Elland, in Yorkshire, a society existed—it still lives, and is vigorous in well-doing—the sole object of which was, the highly important one of spreading a fostering wing over those aspirants to the ministry of the church of England whose means were not sufficient to enable them to take the necessary degree at the university. By the advice of Mrs. Thornton, application was now

made to this institution, the transcendent utility of which will be at once seen, when it is known that neither the subject of this memoir, nor many others who have been and now are ornaments of our church, would ever, in all probability have become her ministers, but for support derived from that source. The late Rev. Henry Foster, and the Rev. Richard Cecil, were deputed by the directors of the Elland fund to examine the pretensions of the young man who now presented himself before them. Two fitter men for the discharge of this important trust could not have been selected: the one of no mean talents, and eminent in every eye but his own for spirituality: the other, to intellectual powers of great compass and originality, joining what was still more valuable in an examiner, a standard and practice singularly pure and apostolical.

Those who pass through life with a smooth current and favourable gale, little think of their endurances who have to stem the stream. ‘Have I money or lands? Have I any present advantages?—My portion is small, and my hopes and prospects rest all in the hands of that Almighty Being who has hitherto kept me. Without this assurance my comfort would be at a very low ebb.’ Such was the expression of his feelings, who was compelled to have recourse to Christian friends for his maintenance at college; and who,

not without some perturbation, yet with implicit reliance upon his Heavenly Father, awaited his examination and its decisive result. What passed on this occasion, he has recorded; and as it is illustrative of his sentiments, and those of a class of ministers then held in high contempt, and still much misunderstood, it may be well to refer to this record.

‘The chief topics of inquiry with Mr. Foster and Mr. Cecil, were sudden impulses and sinless perfection. As to Calvinism and Arminianism, the points I chiefly expected to be mentioned, how agreeably I was deceived when Mr. Foster remarked, ‘that if St. Paul, so great an apostle, said,—“here we know in part”—how much more may we;—he was decided for himself, and would let others think for themselves.’

‘Mr. Cecil asked me,—‘What is your reason for preferring the church establishment to Mr. Wesley’s connection.’ I observed, ‘From the first moment of my having any views to the ministry, they have been directed to the church; which might arise from my having been a constant attendant on the service of the church, when at school, and the pleasure I then felt in it. These views, and this esteem for the church, have remained with me. The excellence of its economy strengthens me in the preference;

added to which, it is the establishment of the kingdom.'

'I should be glad to know,' said Mr. C., 'what you think of perfection?' 'I told him I thought perfection consisted in being blameless in life and conversation, and in setting the affections on things above; and that, to that I was continually aspiring.'

'But,' said Mr. C., 'many believe and profess more.' 'I told him so it seemed. For Mr. Foster mentioned having heard Dr. Coke preach, that whilst one evil thought remained in the soul, it was not born of God. But I never heard him preach or profess it.'

'And with regard to the Calvinists and Arminians,—whose opinions do you follow?'

'Indeed, sir,' said I, 'I have never read a book on the subject, except the Bible, in my life. I have always made it a point to leave those things; as I think it productive of evil to dive into intricacies which can never be perfectly cleared.'

'You think,' said he, 'very rightly; I have acted in the same manner myself. I make it a point never to handle these things in public. But you say you have read the Bible,—what views do you gather from the Bible?'

'Sir,' said I, 'my views, as gathered from the Bible, are simply these,—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that



whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”’

The period of suspense between the report of the examiners, and the determination of the society, for some unexplained cause, lasted long.

It was not till the spring of 1791 that, after an interview with one of the directors of the Elland Institution, his final acceptance was signified. ‘I am accepted,’ he writes to his mother, “March 18, 1791;—‘no doubt your heart overflows with gratitude. I am sure mine does. Mr. Atkinson is quite a father to me; the kindness I have experienced in Lcds far eclipses all other favours. “Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me, bless his holy name.” ‘Though his voice be not audible,’ (as Judge Hale observes,) ‘nor the directions he gives perceptible to sense, yet it is as real as if we heard the voice saying, “This is the way, walk ye in it.”’

The agency of God in human affairs is discernible on every side. But next to the case of nations, those mighty waters, on which the breath of man makes so slight an impression, and upon which God moves so sensibly, it is peculiarly evident in such an instance as that before us;—the son of a mother left in the desolation of widowhood. There the Father of the fatherless, and the God of the widow, makes his love

so legible, that those who are the least observant of providence, cannot but read the lines. Where was this orphan ever placed in which some one was not raised up to exercise towards him a disposition almost parental?

In the suitableness and kindness of the conductor of those studies which were to prepare Mr. Thomason for college, these observations are fully substantiated. A clergyman of the name of Clark, of Chesham Bois, in Buckinghamshire, at the recommendation of the Elland Society, who were to pay simply for his board, agreed to instruct him without any remuneration. For this task he was well qualified. Time had indeed laid the weight of seventy years upon his head, but his strength of body and mind were unimpaired; and the warmth of his heart, glowing with love to God and man, was unabated. But two of his pupils, the one writing at the time, the other taking an extended retrospect, shall depict their tutor.—

‘*April 16, 1791.*

‘He is past the age of man,’ Mr. Thomason writes, ‘yet as vigorous as ever. Every Sunday morning he preaches and reads all the prayers, at a church distant nine miles from this place; he reads the prayers and preaches at this church in the afternoon; and expounds in his own

house in the evening. His earnestness and love for souls are so great, I look at him, and hear him with admiration. In conversation, his cheerfulness and vivacity can be compared to nothing but that of a person of eighteen. He abounds in tales and humour; and they are made channels of instruction. Two children, whom he boards in his own house, declare they never were so happy as in his company. In his school he is equally pleasing. The more questions his pupils ask, the better he is pleased; and he will not let us pass over one word till it is well understood. It is a pleasure to be taught by such a master, and a satisfaction to carry to him the fruits of our labour.'

'That venerable and truly excellent minister, the late Mr. Clark,'—to adopt the description and the very words of one<sup>1</sup> who writes with a warmth and freshness of feeling, which no lapse of years can impair—"for nearly half a century was the learned and indefatigable tutor of some of the most distinguished men, both as laymen and clergymen, of the times in which he lived. It having been my privilege to receive his last instructions as a tutor, I could not prevail upon myself to omit the opportunity of recording the respect I feel for the memory of one of the most

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Charles Jerram, Vicar of Chobham.

learned, humble, and useful men of the last century, and the rather so as he was not only the beloved and highly venerated tutor of my friend, Mr. Thomason, but one of the most efficient agents in the revival of religion in our church towards the middle and conclusion of the last century. Many clergymen whom I could name of the most decided piety and popular talents, but most of whom along with this esteemed tutor have now entered into rest, received both their education and their deepest religious impressions under his roof.'

In a fellow student, whose destination was similar to his own, Mr. Thomason found as much reason to congratulate himself as in his instructor. The first beams of the morning sun shone upon their united labours, before which they bent their knees together in prayer, and lifted up their voice in praise. Social devotion closed the day. The place where these two friends pursued their combined studies was well adapted to such an occupation, presenting nothing to distract their attention beyond rural sights and rural sounds; and so harmoniously did they pass their time, that the only assignable ground of difference between them was, that the one enjoyed highly, the other had no love whatever for the song of the nightingale.

In addition to the usual plan of preparatory

reading, the study of Hebrew, more unaccountably neglected in England than in any other country, was at Chesham pursued perseveringly. Utter ignorance of the language in which the Old Testament is written, is by scholars amongst ourselves as unblushingly avowed, as an irritable temper, or a defective memory, amongst men in general. To be unacquainted with a Greek idiom or dialect, carries with it some disgrace; but not to know the most elemental parts of the Hebrew tongue, is no deduction from literary reputation: and yet, “*Hebræi bibunt fontes; Græci rivos; Latini paludes.*” As India at this time, had never occurred as a probable field of exertion, the secret guidance of God should be recognized in directing a future translator of the Scriptures to a tutor who ‘was reckoned,’ says Mr. Jerram, ‘an excellent Hebrew scholar and biblical critic, and by the late Mr. Romaine was called the Solomon of his age.’ Without a fundamental knowledge in that branch of literature, Mr. Thomason it is obvious must ever have been incompetent to effect, satisfactorily, any version of the Old Testament.

The ardour of these students, at this critical period of their lives, was so strong, that the expectation of a new companion, whose powers of application were questionable, produced in their bosoms no small discomposure. ‘A lazy

companion,' said one of them, ' would much pain me; we are seldom in bed at half-past four in the morning, a practice I find agreeable as well as profitable. We fear that —— will not apply, not get up early, and not maintain love, three grand articles with us.'

The following extracts from letters to his mother, from January to March 1792, will shew with what a Christian elevation of mind the employments of this youth were pursued.

' Your last letter to me gave me great comfort and pleasure: it was full of advice. I thank Mr. D. likewise for advice such as I have reason to be thankful, has not been wholly neglected. I never expect *fully* and *completely* to observe it; to do this a much more pure, faithful, and vigorous soul than mine should be engaged with all its powers. Disorderly affections, wandering passions, unholy desires, unite their forces in my heart and prevent it from offering that continued incense of prayer and praise which its Maker requires. Yesterday I was exceedingly favoured. In the morning I heard Mr. S. preach, at Great Missenden; from these words, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." In the afternoon Mr. Clark took in hand the whole Lord's prayer, which he paraphrased, or rather commented on, in a masterly manner. In the

evening we heard him expound, when he considered among many other verses, that one, which is a part of our Saviour's prayer for his apostles, "I pray not that thou wouldest take them out of the world, but that thou wouldest keep them from the evil." Ah! thought I, that is the grand point, to be kept from the world, from its evils, its vanities, its snares. The means of grace are very precious: the wearied they refresh, the bewildered they guide, to the mourners they administer comfort, the careless they awaken: will they not rise up in judgment against us, unless received in the spirit of thankfulness and prayer?'

' *Jan. 13, 1792.*

' I have been employed in making a new collection of Hebrew roots; for which purpose my little red book is useful. I consider it a great blessing to have time for these things; they are the comforts of my life: but when I consider how very small a thing might put it out of my power to employ my moments in such a manner, my enjoyments cannot fail of being accompanied with an awe mingled with gratitude. A fall—a bruise—disease—infirmity of any kind, might in a moment incapacitate body and mind for studious inquiries. I often think of this, and the thought causes me to lift up my heart to God.'

‘ *Feb. 17, 1792.*

‘ Mr. Clark has been with us and given us some rules, which I copied down from his own mouth. Being dressed in the morning, let each meditate on the divine perfections; his dependance upon God—his obligations to obey him. Let each recollect his own particular defects or weaknesses, and wherein he is most likely to fail in the duties which he owes to God and man; remembering his reliance on the Redeemer for the forgiveness of his sins, and for power to discharge every duty. Having meditated on these subjects, let each separately apply himself to God in prayer; begging that he may have more enlarged views of the extent of God’s laws, and of his own sins, whether in temper, words, or actions; intreating for an increase of dependance on the Redeemer in every office, and for ability to discharge every duty, and to suppress every wrong temper. Thus runs our preceptor’s advice. O that we may be enabled to follow it! The word of God—our own consciences—our parents—our tutor, unite in teaching us the necessity of meditation and prayer; and shall we after all neglect it? May we receive grace to withstand every opposition, and to love the Lord with all our hearts! May our hearts be submissive and humble; our actions Christian and becoming; our words gentle and loving. My dear



mother, let this letter put an end to all anxiety on our account. Fear not, we shall be blessed while we are careful to pray for a blessing.'

' *March 5, 1792.*

' How ought I to make it my continual prayer, that God would so sanctify my aims, that I may be enabled in all things to behave as becometh a person whose profession is to be sacred. I feel much the importance of a greater conformity to the will of God. Shall I, who am to stand up between God and man, behave in a manner which shews my contempt of him whose messenger I pretend to be? How dreadful the consequence of this! The profession which a minister makes is very awful: he professes to be called by the common Maker and Redeemer of all, on an errand which concerns the salvation of all; this call he professes to be moved to by the Holy Spirit; this profession presupposes a knowledge of the efficacy of that redemption which he preaches. He professes that he has felt the happiness of God's children, and of a life devoted to the service of God. How careful, then, ought such a person to be not to offend God or man; how vigilant should he be, lest by giving way and consenting to the evil of his own heart, he should be led into actions disgraceful to him, both as a learner and teacher of good things. Every

action of such a person is exposed to peculiar scrutiny; and every sin, no doubt, will be punished with peculiar weight. His employment makes him as a city set upon a hill, which cannot be hid; his life, therefore, should be such as will bear the most accurate observation and notice, and the principles of his life such as will bear the searching of God's omniscience, who sits as a refiner's fire on every soul of man. O, who is equal to this? Cleanse thou me, O God, from my secret faults. See what sin there is in me, and dispel it by the operations of thy Holy Spirit. Make me to love thee more and serve thee better, that when thou in thy providence shalt call me to speak in thy name, I may, having myself experienced the happiness which results from being at peace with thee, be enabled to commend this happiness to those whom thou mayest commit to my care.

‘ I am well persuaded that nothing would tend to make me so truly happy, or so consistent in practice, as a continued sense of my own nothingness and sinfulness. Whether it be through the inconstancy of youth, or a temptation peculiarly strong to me, so it is that I am continually forgetting this. Highmindedness will find its way into my soul, and disturb my peace. What have I to boast of? Surely nothing; I have sinned much, and have been forgiven much; I

do still sin, and am still forgiven; shall I be proud? My dear mother, do not forget to pray for me, that my strength to withstand evil may be increased, that I may improve in the knowledge and love of God, and that his peace, which passeth all understanding, may enlighten the natural darkness of my soul, and be my safeguard against the world, the flesh, and the devil.'

In the spring of the year 1792, it was resolved by those who undertook the concerns of the Elland Society, to send one of these fellow-students to the University of Oxford; the other, whose life is under review, to Magdalen College, Cambridge. How little do many know who enter these institutions, with what spiritual trepidation, with what tears and prayers, they are launched into a sea, the shores of which are strewed with the ribs of vessels, wrecked and stranded. Happy those who have Christian advisers at such a moment, happy above all those who tremble for themselves. It will readily be supposed, that the person who had been so conducive to the important step about to be taken, would not stand so aloof at the present juncture. He accordingly received a letter from Mrs. Thornton, 'shewing the greatest interest in his happiness: cautioning him much against the workings of pride and self-will, where he then was, and at Cambridge, for there he was

warned that he would find much temptation.' 'Indeed the prospect before me,' he observed, 'requires much circumspection: a false step at my first entrance may embitter a whole three year's residence. How easy a matter to forget God! How easy to connect myself with persons who care not for God, nor the things of God! How happy will it be if I should find grace, and come off conqueror! May I be enabled, knowing my Master's will, to do it! May my life be regulated by a proper rule and conducted in a proper spirit!' The privileges possessed by those to whom Mr. Clark became a minister, instructor, and friend were inestimable, nor were any of those committed to his charge more sensible of these advantages, than he who was now about to quit the woods of Chesham for the banks of the Cam. 'What a pattern,' he exclaimed, 'for our imitation have we in him. Oh, that we may be strengthened to walk in his steps! His precepts, his advice, his assistance in our studies, spiritual as well as temporal, make him exceedingly beloved. He travels as usual to Loudwater, old as he is. I cannot help reverencing and admiring his character; he has not only spent his life in the ministry, but in sending others into the ministry. What can be more honorable—it is being doubly honorable.'

With such an example before him, the very

opposite to those persons who are described by St. Augustine, as ‘*strepentes vocibus muti moribus* ;’ his notions of personal holiness became daily more distinct and influential, and he was led to these resolutions—‘O that I may be enabled, day by day, to act as a dying creature! May I improve in the knowledge and love of God, and make every thing subservient to the one great end! I am determined, with God’s assistance, to begin afresh. I am determined, by his grace assisting me, to devote my powers to Him; and work, act, think, speak, and live for Him. Nothing is worth a thought but how I may please Him, and this is worth all my thoughts.’

At the moment of his departure from Chesham for Cambridge, joy at the prospects then opening before him was absorbed in grief at quitting the abode of his incomparable tutor: ‘*Cui nec facilitas auctoritatem, nec gravitas amorem diminuit.*’ His connection with Mr. Clark had been one of the prime blessings of his existence—its dissolution was proportionably trying. He bid farewell to him with a heavy heart, and in bidding it in a *Christian* point of view, might well have addressed him in these exquisite lines:

‘*Me tibi supposui teneros tu suscipis annos,  
Socratico, Cornute, sinu—tunc fallere solers  
Apposita intortos extendit regula mores,  
Et premitur ratione animus vincique laborat,*

Artificemque tuo ducit sub pollice vultum.  
 Tecum etenim longos memini consumere soles,  
 Et tecum primas epulis decerpere noctes;  
 Unum opus et requiem pariter disponimus ambo,  
 Atque vercundâ laxamus seria mensâ.'

The following translation, by a poetical friend, is not unworthy the original.

'I, placed beneath thy guidance, found a rest  
 For my young years in thy Socratic breast.  
 Thy sapient sway my erring will subdued,  
 And gently won me to the right and good.  
 My soul no more could reason's force withstand,  
 But took new features from thy plastic hand.  
 'Twas sweet with thee to spend the summer day,  
 Sweet on thy words to feast the night away :  
 Our toil, our rest was one ; one modest food  
 Relax'd our labours and our powers renew'd.'

Of the *last* walk he took with him he says,—  
 the relation of tutor and pupil being on the point  
 of termination, 'our walk together was very affect-  
 ing ; he gave me his parting blessing : he told  
 me he had no doubt we should again meet with  
 everlasting joy upon our heads. 'Watch strictly,'  
 said he, 'over your heart ; be much in prayer :  
 cleave closely to God. Pray for spiritual discern-  
 ment, that you may have a clear perception of the  
 path you should walk in. Pray to walk in that  
 way in spite of all opposition ; thus knowing and  
 doing the will of God, you must be happy.'

## CHAPTER III.

FEW persons ever entered the university under circumstances more friendly to mental cultivation and religious improvement than he who, in the month of October, 1792, was followed by many a prayer from Chesham to Cambridge. The plant which, in that retired spot, had been so assiduously tended, ~~was~~ removed to a place where the blasts ~~were~~ rude—but where it was still carefully protected.

At Magdalen, the college where Mr. Thomason was fixed, many young men of sterling piety, some of whom possessed undoubted talents, associating on Christian principles, became a reciprocal support to each other. This band of students, strong as it then was, not very long afterwards was strengthened by the accession of Mr. Jerram to their number. His delineation of days delightful from communion with God, and diligence in appropriate duties will be read with lively, perhaps with sympathetic interest; and not the

less so because the whole passage breathes the spirit of those lines of inimitable tenderness—

*‘ Quo desiderio veteres revocamus amores  
Atque olim amissas flemus amicitias !’*

Mr. Jerram thus strikingly illustrates this period of Mr. Thomason’s life:—

‘ It became my lot to form, chiefly through Mr. Thomason, a connexion with some of the most excellent, and a few of the most distinguished, members of the university; and I shall ever retain a strong sense of the happiness and benefit I derived from their society. In conversing with him on the various branches of literature pursued at Cambridge, I could not help observing the proficiency he appeared to have made both in the classics and mathematics. For though I was not a competent judge of the extent of his attainments, I was sufficiently read in both these departments to convince me that he must possess both considerable talent and quickness to have enabled him at that early age, greatly to surpass all I had hitherto met with of his own standing. He wrote Latin with great ease and correctness, and occasionally with elegance; and he had taken considerable pains to acquire as much as he could of the style of Cicero. For this purpose he had transcribed the whole of his Offices, and had committed a considerable portion of them



to memory. But I was most struck with his intimate acquaintance with the original languages of the Holy Scriptures. He had read the Greek Testament so often, and with so much care, it was scarcely possible to mention a passage in English for which he could not immediately quote the original. In Hebrew I had only recently commenced my studies, and therefore could form but an inadequate opinion of his attainments in it, but I have reason to believe they were of no ordinary talent. He had the Hebrew Bible divided into several small volumes, and was never without one of them in his pocket. His usual relaxation from his severer studies was his reading of this, and every fragment of his time was gathered up for the purpose of adding to his stores of biblical knowledge. It is not, therefore, surprising, that with this taste and continued perseverance, he arrived at considerable eminence in sacred literature: perhaps few in his day surpassed him in his knowledge of the text of scripture. It happened very fortunately for myself that rooms were vacant contiguous to those of Mr. Thomason, on my first entrance on a college life; and eventually that a third set of rooms were taken possession of by our mutual and highly esteemed friend, Mr. Cocker, the late vicar of Bunny, in Nottinghamshire, so that we occupied the whole of the second floor of one of the college

staircases. I mention this as leading to a connexion, the most delightful and profitable I had ever formed; and I have reason to suppose, that the gratification, if not the benefit of this college friendship was mutual. Our intimacy became so close, that I believe scarcely any person who knew us ever mentioned the name of one of us without associating the name of the other two with it. Very pleasantly, indeed, did nearly four years pass away in this uninterrupted friendship; and when, some years after our separation to different and distant spheres, we met unexpectedly, college associations immediately burst on our minds, and we enjoyed, indeed, a mutual feast.'

Of these two friends, now both in heaven, the remaining friend on earth adds—'Mr. C. possessed considerable quickness of parts, the greatest kindness of heart, an original vein of humour, a keen sense of the ludicrous, an uncommonly even and cheerful temper; the whole regulated by the highest religious principles and Christian piety. There was in him such a combination of qualities, as rendered it impossible to know him without esteeming him, or to be on terms of intimacy with him without loving him. It was in his society that Mr. Thomason and myself enjoyed not only a very great degree of social pleasure, but a more than ordinary share of Chris-

*tian communion. Many and happy were the seasons we spent together in reading the scriptures and in prayer, and now and then, when we could do it without the risk of drawing upon us invidious notice, we heightened our social pleasures by singing our favourite psalms and hymns. Mr. Thomason was but a bad singer, but delighted exceedingly in the performance, and was always the first to propose it. I can truly say, —and I am sure both of my friends, could their sentiments now, alas! be obtained, would heartily join with me,—that these engagements were not only the happiest, but the most profitable of our college occupations. They greatly tended to relax the weariness of the same routine of reading; they counteracted the chilling effect of abstract studies, and the unchristian tendency of Pagan literature and profane mythology: they elevated our minds and feelings above secular pursuits; they kept alive the spark of Christian piety; they fixed our thoughts on our future and holy destination; they prepared us for that part of our approaching ministerial functions, which are of all others the most difficult to perform, and yet are of indispensable importance, when we should be called upon to comfort such as were in sorrow, to direct those that were perplexed about their spiritual state, and to pray with those whose difficulties and peculiar circumstances of trial*

*required more direct and appropriate notice than could be anticipated by any preconceived form of devotion. Nor did these exercises rob us of any of that time which we felt it our duty to devote to our literary pursuits. On the contrary, they gave a sensitiveness to our conscience, and an edge to our sense of duty which forbade us to neglect the course of studies prescribed by our academic superiors.*

‘It was Mr. Thomason’s custom to rise about five in the morning, and as our rooms were nearly contiguous, we alternately lit our respective fires, and applied ourselves to reading in the same room. Our terms of intimacy were so familiar we were constantly in the habit of using each other’s rooms, books, or whatever either of us wanted, that the other had, without the least ceremony. Pleasanter days than these I never spent; they remind me of that happy state when the first Christians had all things common, parted their goods as each of them had need, and continued daily with one accord eating their bread with gladness and singleness of heart and praising God.’

This exalted tone of piety, and this effective train of study, were aided and directed by the tutors of Magdalen, the Rev. Mr. Farish conducting the mathematical, the Rev. Mr. Jowett the classical department; the one profound in

abstruse science, the other celebrated for scholarship and taste; both patrons and promoters of that religion which bears the nearest affinity to that of the Reformation.

Besides these advantages within the precincts of the college, others of invaluable advantage presented themselves in the public ministry and private superintendence of the Rev. C. Simeon of King's College. In him Mr. Thomason found the fidelity of a devoted pastor; the affection of a father and a friend. Of these benefits he thankfully availed himself: and the grateful remembrance of them to his dying hour was indelible. Mr. Simeon's exertions, especially, in behalf of those who were intended for the ministry, were great and incessant. The sight or even the anticipation of spiritual progress in any one who, in after life, 'was to teach and premonish the Lord's family,' was to him an overflowing recompense for all his labors. "*Hoc est quod unum est pro laboribus tantis.*"

In a letter to Mrs. Thornton, Mr. Thomason makes this report. 'Mr. Simeon watches over us as a shepherd over his sheep. He takes delight in instructing us—and has us continually at his rooms. He has nothing to do with us as it respects our situation at college. His Christian love and zeal prompt him to notice us.'—'God has heaped upon me,' he says, in strains that gladdened a mo-

ther's heart, 'more favours than ever. He seems to aim at subduing my heart to his sway by brighter and brighter discoveries of his goodness. Mr. Simeon has invited me to his Sunday evening lectures. This I consider one of the greatest advantages I ever received. The subject of his lectures is natural and revealed religion. These he studies and puts together with much pains and attention. He reads the fruit of his labors to us, and explains it. We write after him. He then dismisses us with prayer.'

Of Mr. Simeon—designating him justly, as highly venerable and beloved,—Mr. Jerram also says, 'I cannot pass over this opportunity of acknowledging my debt of obligation to this truly estimable friend. We were admitted often to his rooms, and enjoyed regular lectures from him on various topics connected with the ministry to which we were looking forward; and I cannot help ascribing to these occasions much of the little good that has resulted from my official labours. His directions on the composition of sermons were invaluable, and I owe to him whatever I have obtained of ease in preparing many hundreds of discourses for the pulpit.'

What a contrast are works of this description,—so disinterested, beneficent, and eminently profitable as Mr. Simeon's—to pitiful frivolities, angry disputations, the curious nothings of useless spe-

culatation, all those learned trifles and vain-glorious popular displays, which have wrung, from lips parched and quivering in dissolution, those words of shame, self-reproach, and agony—‘eheu ! vitam perdididi nihil agendo laboriose,’—or what is said to have been the dying exclamation of a famous Irish preacher—“*Speak not to me of my sermons—alas ! I was fiddling whilst Rome was burning.*”

The subjoined sentiments, selected from his letters within this period, shew how far Mr. Thomson had prospered under his spiritual instructor.

‘Oh ! that I had more of the spirit of a little child to receive the impressions of the Spirit as the wax receives that of the seal. Vain men endeavour to dig a grave for truth, as if the eternal principle could be hidden ; but if they cannot hide truth, truth will cause them to wish to hide themselves.’—

‘It gave me much concern to hear of Mr. D—’s illness. I long to know whether he is better. The brightest sun has a gloom when it rises upon affliction and disease. Time drags his chariot wheels heavily whilst the languid spirits, worn down with the infirmities of the body, can scarcely look around where the prospect is not clouded, or perhaps extended without bounds. It gave me great joy when I heard the comfortable state of his mind. What an invaluable blessing is peace ! To purchase for the soul of man this

happiness, the Son of God was crucified once,—to keep it, man must crucify himself daily.'

'I little thought that —— was so ill. Although she is at a time of life which loudly bespeaks the nearness of death, yet the intimation strikes me with sorrow and amazement. I sincerely hope that her mind is prepared to meet her God, and that the wedding-ring she in her affection leaves me as a dying present, is an emblem of the marriage of the Lamb into which she has entered. What a blessed thing to partake of that happiness!—to be one with him and he with us! The confines of eternity are truly solemn: we are every moment drawing nearer to it; who can tell whether our approach will prove a day's journey only. What need for continual examination! Every day should give us a lesson on the necessity of being much in prayer and holy exercises. What happiness to have at our dying moments the consolation that Christ has died, and through his death our sins are blotted out, and that a way is opened for us into the holy of holies. The Christian may stand unmoved at the drawn dagger of death and defy its point. Stand unmoved, did I say? He will rather rejoice in the full assurance of hope; and stretching out his hand with rapture will cry out, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."—You have pressed home no doubt the truths of religion: you have not



omitted to probe the heart, and to represent Christ crucified. Believe that there is indeed a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and that the fountain is a fountain of life. Believe—have confidence, do not despond. Remember the thief upon the cross. Christ is the same as he then was. He has the same love and power—the same glories—the same paradise in store for those who embrace his mercy. Perhaps ere this her soul is fled; if I never more see her dear face, God's will be done.'

These communications, the last especially, were made, it is evident, under keen emotion. They exhibit acute suffering; yet of such a character that we may well account him happy who endured. At moments like these it is that any additional grief descends not simply with its own weight, but with an augmented pressure. Hence at the retirement of Mr. Jowett from Magdalen—a tutor justly venerated; and at the departure from that college of a young man lately married, on a distant mission, the pupil and the friend was more than usually susceptible of sorrowful impressions. To estimate the loss of a pious and able tutor few are competent; but when hand is grasped by hand, and the eyes and heart overflow, and there is almost a rehearsal of death, all possessed of common feeling can appreciate the demand made upon our sensibilities. 'Our

sorrow,' he says of the former, 'causes us to anticipate the moment, and to fancy him already snatched from us. I do not know what our little society will do when our protector is gone. The loss of Mr. Jowett will be severely felt. Of the latter we found them sitting down to their last meal at the inn, and we gave them great comfort by the interview. They had bid farewell to their friends; it was like rising from the dead to them. O how delighted they were! We on our parts were as much so at causing their aching hearts to feel emotions of joy at such a moment. We went on board; and when the anchor was weighed took a tender farewell. They followed us with their eyes, and beckoned with their hands and hats, till their sails and ours going different ways carried us out of sight of each other.'

But of all the trials mercifully commissioned from above, one of the heaviest was yet behind. Towards the close of the year 1793, Mr. Clark was called unto the joy of his Lord; he died full of years and of grace,—ripe and ready for a blessed immortality. Many poor men to whom he had dispensed the bread that perisheth, and that which endureth to everlasting life; many poor scholars whom he had trained up to tread the path heavenward, and to proclaim the truths of the glorious gospel of the blessed God,—either in person or spirit were heart-felt mourners at

his grave. Let one of these who yielded to no other in love for the living, or regret for the departed, describe this good man's holy unwearied activity in life, in death his hopes brightening as the clouds became more dense and dark. 'For the space of half a century he carried on his ministerial labors with a zeal and fidelity of which we have very few examples. He sent forth many able ministers into the church. His life was a living sermon: few ever left his company unedified. It was his delight to dwell upon the truths of christianity in the most familiar conversation. His house was a refuge to those in distress. Intent on the work of reclaiming sinners, he did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. He placed his whole happiness in the service of his Master. On his death-bed the doctrines he had enforced were seen in action: during a painful fortnight he did not cease to speak to his friends in a most affectionate instructive manner. He looked upon life with contempt—upon death with serenity—upon heaven with rapture.'

'It was my privilege,' Mr. Jerram says, 'not only to receive his last instructions as a tutor, but to attend upon him constantly in his final illness; and to witness his blessed death as a Christian. And it is scarcely possible to conceive anything more solemn, instructive, and interesting than this last scene. His patience

under excruciating pains,—his meekness of temper,—his deep humility,—his thankfulness for every little attention,—his never-varying cheerfulness; and, above all, his unshaken confidence in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ, inspiring him with a hope full of immortality, filled all who were privileged like myself to attend him, as he passed through the valley of the shadow of death, with admiration, and thankfulness to God who had bestowed such grace, and such support and consolation in such trying circumstances.’

When first taken ill, Sept. 17, 1793—to refer to a statement drawn up at the time by Mr. Jerram, whose favoured station was by the bedside of his dying tutor, an honour in which, had it been possible, Mr. Thomason would thankfully have participated—‘Such a shock as this,’ said the sinking yet victorious Christian minister, ‘at my advanced age, must materially affect my constitution; and it is most likely that this disorder will take me off. I can now be but of little use to any body, and therefore not much loss will be sustained by my death.’ To Mrs. C. he spoke much of his expected dissolution, said he thought he should soon see his son; and added, ‘when will the happy time come that I shall be released?’

‘Sept. 20.—Speaking of the sermon he had preached the Sunday before (which was the last he ever delivered,) from 1 Thess. v. 18, “In

every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you," he said, "I can now say, from experience, that there is as much reason to thank God for the afflictions he sends us, as for anything else. I can bless God for laying me upon this bed of sickness, and am thankful for it." The above was intended to be a supplementary discourse to one he had preached the preceding Lord's day, from Psalm ciii. 2, "Bless the Lord, O my soul! and forget not all his benefits." The design of his last sermon was to show that afflictions and crosses were amongst the number of those blessings which call for gratitude. Among other things, he took occasion to exclaim against the vanity and folly of anxiously pursuing worldly objects, and instanced, in particular, the pursuit of knowledge. What he said upon this point seemed to be principally intended for his students. As he had just alluded to this sermon, I took occasion to thank him for the hint, and hoped I should be able to profit by it. "Ah," replied he, "I did not intend its application to you alone, but also to myself. So much vanity generally attends the attainment of a little learning, that it requires great watchfulness to guard against it."

' *Sept. 21.*—I found Mr. R. of C., his son Mr. J. C., and Z. weeping at his bed-side. His disorder at that time appeared to be almost despe-

rate. He had been speaking to them, I believe, before I entered the room ; but he then addressed us individually. To Mr. R. he said, “ I know Mr. R. is a good man, and I doubt not, but I shall meet him in heaven.” To Z. he said, he looked upon him as his *own* child, and exhorted him, with the greatest affection, to flee from those vices and follies into which most young men run. “ Avoid them, pass not by them, turn from them and flee away.” In this address to Z. he seemed particularly affected, and drew his cap over his face to weep. When he turned to his son, his heart seemed too full for utterance. They clasped hands, and bedewed each other plentifully with tears. He appeared to be in an agony of soul for the happiness of his son. Only those who were present can form an idea of the affecting scene. After this, he prayed earnestly for Mr. —, that God would make him a faithful and useful minister of the gospel, and that he would soon provide for him in his church. He then enlarged much on the great necessity there was for ministers to guard against ambition. “ The ministers of the gospel,” said he, “ have great reason to watch against pride, vanity, and many other diabolical sins ; and to beware of preaching in anger or opposition.” Here he expatiated a good deal upon the abasement and humiliation of Jesus Christ. “ The Redeemer,”

said he, “ was spit upon, buffeted, crowned with thorns, and crucified for such poor sinful and unworthy creatures as we are.” This topic seemed to fire his soul with gratitude and love to God his Saviour.’

‘ Sept. 22.—Speaking to two of his friends, who had been educated by him, and for whom he had a particular affection, he recommended mutual affection between them. “ I have not been your father,” said he, “ but I have been in some measure your nurse.” One of them lamenting their distance from each other, Mr. C. said, “ That is nothing where spirits are united. Whether bodies touched, or were ten thousand miles apart, was of little consequence : the union of spirit is every thing.” From this he took occasion to mention the temptations which arise, even from the kindness of friends. “ The kindness of friends I enjoy at this time in a very great degree. They not only do every thing by night and by day for me, but do it with the utmost cheerfulness, which makes the obligation still greater. But from hence arises a temptation. What is it? Why, I am tempted to look for my happiness in my friends, and in what they can do for me, which is wrong. I desire to love and esteem them most sincerely; but I should look for happiness only in God. Here all my hopes should centre, that God may be *all in all*. What a poor helpless creature am

I! to think that *He* who made the heavens and angels and all worlds, whose power is beyond all bounds, that this great Being should condescend to take notice of me, a poor contemptible worm lying here!"

' *Sept. 23.*—During the whole of the day, he was attended by many of his poor distressed sheep, whose hearts were deeply affected with the apprehension of soon losing their spiritual guide. He conversed with them by four or five at a time, parcelling them into proper classes, that "each might have a portion of meat in due season." There being eight of them in the house together, their names were mentioned to him, one of whom he wished to speak to by himself. "The rest," said he, "I hope are the real followers of the Redeemer." I intimated that I hoped the person he had objected to, was a serious man; because he had sat so many years under his preaching. "Yes," replied Mr. C. "he has: but don't you know that there are many stones in the church aisle, which have been there many years, and that they are stones still?" Being afraid that speaking so much would exhaust and weaken him, he was desired to spare himself a little. He answered, "I can preach best now."

' Mr. R. of A. had been mentioning a patient whom he attended, who was so peevish and discontented, that he could scarcely prevail upon her



to follow any of his prescriptions. "I thought," said he to Mr. C. "she formed a perfect contrast with you."—"Ah!" replied Mr. C. "whatever there is in me, I owe entirely to my Redeemer." "I think," said Mr. R. "there is a good deal in a person's natural disposition."—"Natural disposition!" rejoined Mr. C. "I am naturally as irritable as any man. But when I find anger or passion, or any other evil temper arise in my mind, immediately I go to my Redeemer, and confessing my sins I give myself up to be managed by him. This is the way I have taken to get the mastery of my passions."

' During the night he slept a good deal, and a little after sun-rising, he desired us to draw up the window curtains. We were afraid the light would be too powerful for him at the first, and drew them up but a little way. "Draw them to the top," cried he, "the light refreshes me." He then looked through the window with inexpressible pleasure in his countenance, and exclaimed, "The sun shines upon every tree and plant; and the Sun of Righteousness shines upon me."

' *Sept. 27.*—I sat with him a considerable time. He was very weak, and could not speak without difficulty. I quoted that verse out of the 23d Psalm, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, &c." He answered, "Yes, he will be with me. What are all my sufferings,

when compared with the Redeemer's! When in his agony he sweat great drops of blood! What love was this!" Here his speech began to fail, and he intimated that it pained him to speak, but wished he was able.

' *Sept. 28.*—Being restless, and unable to lie in an easy posture, he said, "This is the way to happiness. Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven."

' *Sept. 29.*—To a person sitting up with him he said, "When I am gone, I suppose my people will go some one way, and some another. The Lord grant that they may be not disjoined from Christ."

Thus sustained by the omnipotent Redeemer to the last—and to the last exhibiting the power of faith in his every sentiment and in his whole demeanour: this great and good man found the iron gate of death opened with no grating and appalling sound but easily and as by an angel's hand and he passed into the paradise of God.

During the two years Mr. Thomason had been at college, his demeanour and industry were such as amply to justify the wisdom of expending on his education a sum, which could not be inconsiderable, however prudently managed. But, hitherto misconceiving the line of his duty, he had not read mathematics with ardour; nor was it till the end of his second year, that the advice

of a friend, seconded by that of Mr. Simeon, corrected the error. Without, therefore, neglecting what conduced to personal and ministerial usefulness, he began to bestow on Newton an intense application: never had he doubted but that the religious student may serve God in those avocations in which the mind, for a while, seems absorbed; but, sent to college, as he had been, by others, expressly to prepare for holy orders, it had been a question of conscience with him, whether he ought to abstract so much time from the study of divinity, as would be necessary to supply any hope of his shining as a star of lustre and magnitude in the academic firmament. No sooner was his mind set right on this head, than he addressed himself to his work with an energy which, had it animated him from the first, might have carried him, notwithstanding the powerful competition of that year, to the point of supreme elevation on which Henry Martyn afterwards planted his foot.

A college life, especially when studious, is as uniform, and as little fertile in topics of general interest, as the plains of the Pampas. The monotony of it is not badly represented in these words to his mother. ——‘ You give a picture of domestic ease. I have only to say, I am writing close by the fire, alone in my room; the river under my window flowing calmly;—the

trees making a gentle noise ;—the bells tolling ;—the night dark.' By what can this dull uniformity be relieved, but by the diversity of characters that crowd an arena like that of Cambridge ?

An interview with an American, with whom he had been at school, whose family had known prosperity, but were now reduced to poverty, who yet could 'rejoice in that he was now made low,' summoned up sensations that are seldom roused from their recesses in the human breast. 'What made this story remarkable,' he says, 'is that since we were at school, I have crossed the Atlantic, and travelled over America, his native country ; and yet after all this, notwithstanding the then flourishing state of his family, we are met at Cambridge,—pensioners on the same bounty,—partakers of the same bread,—supported by the same friends,—laboring for the same ends.

Collision with a rigid adherent to system in religion, he mentions, likewise, as producing a variety, though not of the most pleasing kind, in the tranquil tenor of his days. He was a man given to the scholastic, synthetical mode of reading the scriptures, instead of adopting the popular analytical method : he was ever trying to occupy heights where the ground is slippery, and the atmosphere too rarified for respiration ; Mr. Thomason, on the other hand, preferred a lower, safer,

and more habitable region of the mountain, loving most of all those valleys where the footsteps of the flock are distinctly visible.

His account of this person, and of himself when brought into contact with him, is this—  
“With many amiable qualities, he is a very high Calvinist, and makes the most rigid tenets not only important, but necessary to salvation. It has always been a matter of surprize to me that religious people are led into these errors. The marrow of the Gospel is to believe in Jesus Christ: and the life of religion is to have him formed in us as the hope of glory. For my part, what the Bible says, I must believe; and what I cannot reconcile, I leave. There are difficulties on both sides; but this is certain, and agreed on all hands, that they who go to Christ “shall in nowise be cast out.” This is a comfortable text, and I have often pleaded the promise on my knees before God; a promise which opens the door of heaven to a lost race, and shews us a reconciled God, smiling upon us with the tenderness and love of a father.”

Allied to these sensations, were those arising from the refusal of ordination to an acquaintance of his own college, against whose conduct nothing could be alleged, except that he was enrolled in Magdalen, by whose gates the martyr Bilney was wont in olden time to pass

on visits of mercy to the castle, and within whose walls Bilney's doctrines were then prevalent. The master of the college generously took up the young's man cause, but his defence and remonstrances were unavailing. To relate this, without an expression of thankfulness in comparing that period with the present, would be unpardonable. May it never happen that a follower of Cranmer, Latimer, and Herbert, is rejected from serving at our altars! Far too admirable is the Church of England to be endangered by such rejections.

Of a visit he made, in company with two college friends, one of whom died the Sunday after his ordination, to Mr. Venn, the author of that admirable work the Complete Duty of Man, Mr. Thomason speaks with unusual interest. All that fell from the lips of that holy man, then languishing in body, but in soul rejoicing like a strong man to run a race, was listened to with wonder and avidity by these young collegians. The expression that sank into Mr. Thomason's mind was, 'In what a state should I now be had I only the Socinians' God to trust to.' Mr. Jeram to this day retains an unfading remembrance of that most instructive and encouraging interview. 'We obtained a letter of introduction from Mr. Simeon, and I shall never forget the sensation which this visit produced. It was one of the

most memorable days of my life, and I believe my friend Thomason viewed it in the same light. Mr. Venn appeared to us all as a being of a superior order—eminently a man of God. His love of piety—his lofty conceptions of the grandeur of the Christian religion, and the extent of his ultimate triumphs—his unbounded confidence in God—his exalted views of the importance and dignity of the Christian ministry—his ardent feelings and animated countenance—his glowing eloquence and affectionate address—his extensive acquaintance with the wisest and best men of the last generation, and his inexhaustible stores of anecdote filled us all with admiration, and left an impression on my mind which has not yet been effaced, and which for many months after the interview was as fresh and vivid as at the time it was produced. This extraordinary man did not die like common Christians. The late Mr. Robinson of Leicester told me that he visited Mr. Venn in his last illness, and began to speak to him, to use Mr. Robinson's words, 'in my poor way.' O, exclaimed Mr. Venn, that is poor comfort, brother, here is the passage I build on, "Who hath spoiled principalities and powers, and hath made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." These words he uttered with an energy and animation peculiar to himself. His mind was filled with the contem-

plation of a triumph, and he anticipated nothing less than soon meeting a victorious Saviour, who should tread all enemies under his feet.'

That Mr. Thomason did not lose sight of higher objects, when he concentrated his intellectual powers, and bent their focus on mathematics, is plain from what he says of his success in the schools. "I passed through them with much more honor than I could have expected, considering the great disadvantages under which I labour. I find it necessary to be on my guard. The Lord keep me watchful and humble, and enable me, when engaged in worldly business, to be fervent in heavenly affections." In the same spirit of lowliness and self-recollection he, this year, received information of his having obtained the Norrisian prize. His essay was to prove "That the holy scriptures, rightly understood, do not give encouragement to enthusiasm or superstition:" and it was pronounced the best, as one of the judges told him, amidst many others of eminent merit. The reward was a gold medal and books. In announcing to Mrs. Thornton this event, which filled him with joy, and cast a bright and broad light on his future prospects, 'Blessed be his name,' he says; 'he has given me to know that of all human attainments, none is capable of giving happiness. Nor is any worthy the name of wisdom. The fear of the Lord,



that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.' And to his mother he writes, 'Against all expectations I have succeeded, and I rejoice; I know what pleasure it will give you, and it is my delight to add to your comforts. It will be a testimony to Mrs. Thornton and to the society who have sent me here, that I have not misspent my time.'

An extract or two from such an essay can afford no adequate idea of it as a composition; it is like producing detached stones as specimens of architectural design: but they may serve to shew his general tone of sentiment.—“God is love—language could go no further. And this revelation of his love is as great a demonstration of it as is probable to conceive. Conscious of a depraved nature, the creature would, without such a condescension on the part of the Deity, tremble at approaching him. Awed by the terrors of his majesty, he would not dare to look upward. But when the Deity vouchsafes to reveal his mercy, and offers the most convincing argument of love that could be devised, by the gift of his only Son, he begins to entertain hopes of acceptance with so merciful a being, and is gradually led on from the terrors of slavish fear to a sense of his favour and expectation of his glory.

“Whatever professions are made, or hopes entertained, unless they are attended by a conscien-

tious discharge of our duty, the scripture pronounces them a *delusion*. All idle dreams of future happiness, and groundless hopes of reward are reprobated. Our conduct is the only test of our sincerity.

“Christianity is much misunderstood. Many suppose it productive of melancholy: but this arises from not observing the genuine tendency of the scriptures. It is calculated to establish, not to destroy, our happiness: to fill us with that peace that flows from a hope of immortality; not to alarm our fears and embitter our lives. Enthusiasm is as pointedly reprobated as superstition. Our religion must be reasonable, consistent, uniform: our faith must stand on a solid foundation that can bear the severest scrutiny: it must be confirmed by the fullest conviction of our judgment.”

These brief selections are sufficient to disprove the errors cherished concerning that school of divinity in which Mr. Thomason had been brought up. Can plainer testimonies be adduced against whatever is visionary and unsound in opinion, unholy in practice. Yet to some or other of these extremes, to both not unfrequently, persons of Mr. Thomason's stamp are accused of tending. Prejudice breathes and sees and hears in an atmosphere of its own; could it once be dragged or allured into a purer air, it would expire.

At the commencement of the last, the decisive term, Mr. Thomason's studies received so serious an interruption, that had he been endued with less mental elasticity, it must have proved fatal to all hopes of honor in the Senate House. It was a proposal from the late Charles Grant, Esq. "Magnum et venerabile nomen," to fill the Mission Church at Calcutta. This call Mr. Thomason, acting in the spirit of the words 'non magna relinquo, magna sequor,' was not unwilling to obey. The agitation of this question, requiring as it did much anxious thought, could not but fail of obstructing a course of reading. Newton was first *partially* then *wholly* laid aside. It was introductory also to a step influential in the highest degree on his future happiness. To the idea of parting with her son, agonizing under any aspect, his mother could not be reconciled unless an union were effected, promising a substitution in a distant land for her tenderness and care over him in England. To Carlisle therefore he went to solicit the hand of one for whom he had long cherished a warm though secret attachment; but no sooner had he obtained her consent, and his mother at an immense expense of feeling had agreed to surrender him, than apprehensions arose that an Indian climate might be detrimental to Miss F.'s delicate health. These fears, combined with some reluctance on her part to leave

England, caused him to waver in his design : and an event occurring shortly after, afflictive to him beyond any previous dispensation, to his mother absolutely overwhelming, he resolved to decline the appointment, which was then offered to Mr. Buchanan of Queen's College, and by him accepted.

Upon this decision Mr. Jerram remarks with his usual ability, and with the discriminating judgment of a wisely observant Christian, ' Here we cannot but notice the wisdom and goodness of divine Providence in so over-ruling events as to bring about the best final results. Had Mr. Thomason accepted the chaplaincy he would have been a very faithful and efficient minister of the gospel, and have done much good. But I question whether at that time it would have extended much beyond the immediate sphere of his labours. He was young, decidedly pious, devoted and active, and must have been a blessing wherever he was stationed. He had an extraordinary facility in learning languages, and would have become an eminent oriental scholar, and in all probability India would have been eminently benefitted by his translations of the Scriptures into more than one of their vernacular tongues. But I do not think he would have exercised a commanding influence, nor formed any very comprehensive plans for the benefit

of that vast continent, nor have entered at all in that almost boundless field in which Dr. Buchanan rendered himself so eminently conspicuous, and which he cultivated with such great advantage to the millions of India.

‘Of all the literary and pious men which Cambridge at that time possessed—few, perhaps none, had the peculiarly appropriate qualifications of Dr. Buchanan for that important station. His mind was calm, intellectual, and comprehensive. His manners reserved, dignified, commanding. His literary attainments were considerable, and gave promise of great increase. He sought, acquired, and effectually sustained a place in the society of the most learned men in the University: even whilst an undergraduate, there was an elevation about him which left younger men of inferior talents and attainment, but ill at ease in his presence. His very appearance conveyed the idea of a person destined to do things at which others would never aim, and to carry measures on a scale of magnitude to which few would find themselves equal, or dream of accomplishing. When it is added, that Dr. Buchanan was as eminent for his piety—as distinguished for his talents—as simple in his manners as he was dignified in his appearance—as single in heart as comprehensive in mind—as attentive in the discharge of very humble duties as he was active in

planning and vigorous in executing schemes for Christianizing the immense population of India,—no doubt will be felt that the loss of Mr. Thomason's labours *at that particular crisis* was more than compensated by those of Dr. Buchanan.'

Under the affliction which contributed mainly to cut the thread of Mr. Thomason's designs, and left the situation he would have filled open to Dr. Buchanan, he expresses himself in this strain of submissive suffering,

'My soul is pained to the quick. I hope that it is not all over, and that these eyes may see her once more. She is perpetually on my heart—chained to it with links of adamant. I cannot express my peculiar fondness for her, and the pain I have felt,—it is like wrenching away a part of myself. The sword has passed through my soul. It seems almost a dream that my beloved M. should be snatched away: it appears too dreadful to be true. But I remember, I shall go to her—this is the balm that infuses comfort. You and I shall go to her; and how shall we find her, weak and helpless? exposed to disease and death? Nay, healed of all infirmities, possessed of all perfections. How shall we find her employed? Her business is praise,—and this will be our business too; wherefore let us comfort one another.'

Having thus poured out his sorrows and conso-

lations, in a subsequent communication he writes to his mother—‘ M— is no more,—but I am restored to you. Yes, I was resolved you should not lose two of your children at once, and have entirely given up the thought of leaving the kingdom. The death of M. has decided the point. All my friends here rejoice at my determination.’

His mind having been checked in that close attention requisite for obtaining a distinguished degree at Cambridge, his spirits exquisitely wounded, he addressed himself again to the arduous business of attempting to recover his lost ground. ‘ You would pity me if you knew how hardly I am driven,’ was his account of himself in the midst of his breathless efforts—his vehement contention at the end of the year 1795 : yet he could ‘ bless God that his affections were not engrossed with his studies ; and that he was enabled, in some measure, to go through his daily occupations as God’s servant.’

Here we have religion producing its legitimate results, imparting a lustre and a fragrancy to ordinary employments, sanctifying—elevating—controuling—sustaining. Who can doubt but that the mind thus poised and balanced was able to exert itself with new alacrity and with increased effect. The station Mr. Thomason attained after the usual examination was that of fifth wrangler, a position most honourable in itself,

and in a relative sense meriting a stronger designation. But whatever its value, when tried by a standard purely intellectual, if a Christian estimate be adopted its worth will be immeasurably enhanced. It was sought as for God; it was received in a spirit, which under total failure would have prevented the excitement of feverish irritation, or the collapse of sullen disappointment; and which, in the moment of exultation, humbly referred success to the goodness of God, and devoutly consecrated it to his glory.



## CHAPTER IV.

IF ever the sands of life may be termed golden, those are so which pass in the interval between taking an academical degree, and entering holy orders. Time, ever precious, acquires then a tenfold value ;—would that our universities were solicitous to turn it to that account of which it is susceptible. Schools of the prophets amongst the Jews, kindred institutions in the early Christian church, are admired, but not imitated. That the bow which has been long and tightly strung, requires relaxation ; that midnight lamps and studious seclusion should be succeeded by the sunshine of cheerful scenes, commends itself at once as reasonable. But let not the concession be abused. Many choosing the ministry, as they choose heaven, because the least exceptionable of other alternatives, mis-spend this invaluable period in foreign or domestic dissipation ; and then rush into the clerical office without those indispensable pre-requisites, sound knowledge and Christian love : He will not thus approach the heavenly function who is truly called to it of God. Such had been Mr. Tho-

*mason's education, so completely had the study of divinity made a part of it, that an appearance before the bishop immediately after his degree, would not, in his case, have been precipitate. In Mr. Clark, in his college tutors, in Mr. Simeon above all, he had been greatly assisted in becoming a "workman that needeth not be ashamed."* All their aids were so many incitements to diligence still greater, at this important juncture. We find him, accordingly, making a scriptural digest of all passages connected with his sacred vocation: reading the word of God in the original tongues; translating part of it, (the book of Job): making himself master of Josephus in Greek; and acquainting himself with those admirable compositions, the Homilies of the Church of England, which, if perused attentively by all who think of becoming ministers of the Church of England, would teach them that doctrine which the church expects her bishops, priests, and deacons *at all times* to inculcate; for to maintain that the framers of our Articles intended to bind the men of this and of every age, to predicate the *exclusive suitableness of the Homilies to the times in which they were composed*, is an absurdity and subterfuge admitting few parallels. In addition to all this, under the guidance of Professor Carlisle, he bent himself to the acquisition of Arabic. For the Norrisian prize also he again

was a competitor ; and though unsuccessful, and not unconscious of disappointment, was the first to communicate the news of victory to the friend from whom he had sustained defeat.

From the pen of Mr. Jerram, this very friend, we have the account of what took place at this moment of friendly rivalry. And as it is an observation as old as the days of Martial, a remark too often verified under the light of the gospel, that whilst generosity from one friend towards another is not unfrequent, whilst money or even lands may be liberally bestowed, concession to intellectual superiority is yielded grudgingly and rarely, Mr. Jerram's recital will be read with a pleasing perception of the commanding power of Christian principles.

“ In connection with our religious studies, Thomason and myself had thought it right to enter the list of candidates, during two successive years, for the annual Norrisian prize ; which consists of a gold medal and some books, for the best essay on some moral or religious subject given out by the professor. And I allude to this simply to illustrate a fine trait in my friend's character. In the first of our attempts, Thomason obtained the prize, and in the second I was his successful rival. On the latter occasion some considerable delay took place in announcing to whom the medal was adjudged. We had

heard indeed that it was again destined for our College, and we *hoped* it would find its way up our stair-case. I happened one morning to be looking out of my window and saw one of the university beadles entering our court and approaching our part of it. He ascended our stair-case, came near my door, passed by it, and proceeded to Thomason's. I will not conceal my feelings at that moment, nor deny that I instantly fell on my kness to beseech God to preserve me from envying the success of my dear friend and to enable me to rejoice in it. I had scarcely risen when Thomason hastened into my room, followed by the beadle, and with a gladness of heart which I shall never forget, told me that the prize was awarded to me, and that the beadle, not knowing my room, had called at his and asked where he could find me. I sincerely believe my friend could scarcely have rejoiced more had he a second time succeeded. I may add that on two or three future occasions he wrote for and obtained the prize." Nor was this, in Mr. Thomason, the mere ebullition of the moment. In the same noble spirit of disinterestedness and affection he wrote to his mother and apprized her of the result. 'I have lost the prize: Jerram has got it. I am not mortified: it is still in the family, a young man of the same college, of the same church and profession. I have had it once, it ill becomes me

to murmur.' More admirable surely than any medal of gold ; more graceful and ennobling than all the favours universities can bestow, was this mutual self-denying friendship. Difficult it is to determine to which of these two Christian friends these lines were most strictly applicable—

*' Nec quo candidior laudes aut lætior alter  
Promovet alterius—propriasve modestior audit.'*

The society which had carried Mr. Thomason through his college career, was now obliged to leave him wholly to his own resources ; and, he was at first like those parasitical plants from which the props have been withdrawn. Happily for him the credit of his degree was not an empty sound ; of substantial use was it at this moment. In the spring of 1796 an offer of a private tutorship was accepted by him at Baldock ; where, in a situation of comfort, profit, and usefulness, prosecuting an employment so easy as not to interfere with his more appropriate studies, he was fixed till his ordination. From this retreat he looked back with admiring thankfulness ; forward with animated affiance. ' My soul,' he could affirm, ' has been much blessed, and I have been enabled to live more in a state of prayer than I ever remember to have done. I long to know more of the power of religion, and to realize the things of eternity ;—blessed be God for what he has done for me in this respect. My birth-day was distinguished by

nothing but a firm determination to give myself more unreservedly to God, with the divine assistance. When I look back and consider what has been done for me, I am like a traveller at the foot of the Alps,—he sees mountains above mountains,—I see mercy beyond mercy.’

To his mother at Totness, the place of her first and fondest recollections, he wrote from Baldock,—‘Tracing back the events of twenty years, what mercies and afflictions have you received. You have been very destitute, but the goodness of God hath followed you; and the greatest of all mercies is, he hath brought you to fear Him, and separated you from the world. Take a retrospect of the days and months of affliction, and how is the prospect brightened by God’s causing you to love him, his ways and his word. You stand in Totness as upon Pisgah. Behind you is the wilderness; before you is the land of promise, to which I trust you are hastening.’

The month of October, the time for Mr. Thomason’s ordination, drawing near, in imitation of the highest and holiest example, he set apart a season for fasting and prayer. A week was devoted by him ‘to entreat the Lord to prepare him for the work of the ministry, and to give him a more lively zeal for his glory in deadness to the world, and such a delightful and

animating view of his beauty and sufficiency as Redeemer, as should fill his soul with love and praise.' The approaching examination by the Bishop of Ely could not be at all formidable to one whose mind, like his, was well stored with divinity: but an ordeal of another kind he did dread. Prepossessed, unhappily, as the Bishop had been against Mr. Simeon, no young man, who had been an attendant at Trinity Church, could escape suspicion at Ely. A letter, indeed, from his lordship, highly commendatory of his Norrisian prize essay, in some measure allayed these apprehensions, until his admission to an interview with the bishop, when they were redoubled, and rejection seemed inevitable. But the sun struggled through the clouds; explanation was accepted, misconceptions gave way, and the bishop, expressing his good opinion of Mr. Simeon's intentions, conceding his right to judge for himself on the points of difference, and satisfied also with the competency of Mr. Thomason, laid his hands upon his head Oct. 16, 1796, and gave him his commission as deacon. And if, when viewing the cathedral as he did some months before, these were his reflections and prayers, 'To be a carnal priest is no trifling matter. I earnestly pray God to take me out of the world if his omniscient eye foresees that I shall dishonor him by the unfaithful exercise of

so holy a profession:’ With what awe and abasement did he kneel before the altar and join in that affecting silent prayer which is succeeded by the burst of supplicatory song, in which the congregation suddenly unite! ‘I cannot give you an idea of what I felt as I entered the cathedral; and now that I am returned, I have a weight on my mind I cannot describe. If I have been hasty and forward in undertaking so holy an office, I pray the Lord to pardon me, and to qualify me for the work that lies before me; then shall I preach as in the presence of the Judge of quick and dead.’

Thus did he unbosom himself to his mother, whose joy as well as Mrs. Thornton’s on this occasion may be imagined by those who have tasted a felicity purer than any that has its rise on earth. Their plans, counsels, prayers, had been crowned with a marked blessing. The seed had been cast abroad, the harvest reaped. The object of their unceasing affection was now a minister of the church of England, and the satisfaction derived from this event was greatly enhanced by the circumstances under which he commenced his ministry. The curacy of Trinity Church, Cambridge, and that of Stapleford, about five miles distant from that town, were committed to him; he was there a fellow-labourer with Mr. Simeon, and this was justly deemed by them no small



advantage to a young minister just beginning his clerical course.

‘The reflection that one is standing up in the presence of God, speaking for eternity to immortal souls who are hearing for eternity, has a solemn effect. I find, however, that it brings with it peculiar temptations. I have to struggle with many inward trials, to which I before was a stranger.’ These are his remarks on the more public exercises of his function in which he complains of not finding that comfort he expected. In another branch of his ministry it was far otherwise: his aptitude in teaching the young was unusual; the work of catechising, therefore, was proportionably pleasant. What to many is an *effort*, to him was a work as easy and gratifying as it appears to have been to Bishop Andrews, who is thus described by our great poet—

‘Cælestique animos saturantem rore tenellos  
Grande salutiferæ religionis opus.’

If to represent the bishop as finding pleasure in the humble work of catechising, were no poetical fiction; equally true was it, that the curate of Stapleford was not less diligent or less delighted with that occupation. He was in the habit of reaching the village at six in the morning, and bestowing two hours in instructing the children before church.—Such was the tenor of his

ministerial life; and that it was progressively holy and happy, his observations at the close of the year indicate: 'My sermons are not written without much study and prayer. Preaching on the Parables is useful to myself and acceptable to my hearers. At Stapleford the congregation increases; the children go on exceedingly well; my friends inform me my voice and manner of preaching improve. I am glad to hear this, as it is a matter of importance in this place. I bless God my views of the great business in which I am engaged, and my desires to devote myself to God and his cause are stronger than ever.'

No one was ever more elevated above all undue regard for money than the subject of this memoir; he never could be unworthily attracted by the coin sticking in the mire.<sup>1</sup> A certain style of living, however, was necessary at Cambridge, which he had not the means of maintaining. The consideration moved him sensibly, for it threatened a dissolution of his connection with Mr. Simeon and his flock, towards all of whom he entertained a growing attachment and interest. Whilst this matter was pressing heavily on his mind, a fellowship and lectureship providentially became vacant at Queen's College, for which he lost no time in offering himself as a

<sup>1</sup> Persius, Sat. v. line 111.

candidate. Dec. 29, 1796, he says, '*I am waiting as calmly as possible for the determination at Queen's College, which will take place next Tuesday week. I leave my affairs in the hands of God. He knows what is best for me, and will bring it to pass. It is an important interval with me: the decision of that day will determine my situation in life. If I should not go to Queen's, which is highly probable, it is certain I cannot live any longer in college. It seems a time for God to work, and I trust he will work and influence the decision in such a way as shall extricate me.*' God heard his prayer and gave him occasion to exclaim, 'How much has a single week brought forth; a state of prosperity is always dangerous, but doubly so when it succeeds one of adversity. In a moment I was raised from a dependent precarious subsistence, to one of independence. The more I consider it, the more I am astonished at the goodness of God. When I look around and survey my comforts, so suitable to my situation as a minister and as a student, I am lost in wonder: the Lord is indeed good: Oh! that I could love him more.'

Chosen to a fellowship and assistant tutor-ship in Queen's College, the year 1797 opened on Mr. Thomason fraught with benefits more than adequate to his wants and wishes, but bringing on its wings new and untried burdens, for he had to

give lectures daily in Mathematics and in Classics. A collegiate atmosphere is sometimes injurious to the play of the natural affections, and still oftener has it a withering effect on those which are pastoral. Many merge the minister in the tutor: far more in earnest are they in sharpening the intellects *of young men to come off conquerors in the senate house than in desiring to see Christians victors over the world*, and sinners brought out of darkness into marvellous light. That the ministers of Jesus Christ may serve the Lord in this department, many have given incontestible proofs. May the writer be allowed a moment's digression to allude to one, the late Rev. T. Loyd, formerly tutor of King's College. The path he trod was one of peculiar sanctity: in him was the meekness of wisdom. With talents of an exalted order, with spirituality of a cast still more uncommon, such was his humility that a child might lead him. Yet, when conscience demanded it, he could assume a determined front, exhibiting a fixedness of purpose similar to his who, in a moment of perplexity and peril, uttered those memorable words, 'Here I stand, God help me.'<sup>1</sup> Many of his pupils rise up and call him blessed—he does so who bears this feeble but faithful testimony to his worth. In a spirit congenial to his, Mr. Thomason engaged in the

<sup>1</sup> Luther.

“toils and duties incumbent upon him. *In* them he had a single eye to God, *from* them he returned with a spring of gladness to the more sacred parts of his calling. To have his pupils ‘do worthily in Ephratah and become famous in Israel,’ was not with him a matter of indifference but of hearty desire, and of persevering endeavour. Yet how much more intensely did he long to hear that sinners were impressed under his sermons; and how much more vivid was his satisfaction at learning, as he now did for the first time, that one of his auditors had been impressed deeply by a discourse which he had preached on the parable of the lost piece of silver. This year England rung with joy for one of our great naval victories; and readily as he could sympathize in national weal or woe, much more readily did he participate in those sensations which cast either a light or a shadow, upon the pathway of the poor. At Lord Duncan’s achievement, together with all his countrymen, he rejoiced: but when he witnessed, as he did at this period of his parochial visitations, the last enemy signally subdued in the chamber of sickness and dissolution, he rejoiced more than those who divide the spoil.

In the autumn of this year, Mr. Thomason visited Carlisle, and on his way thither he renewed his intercourse with Mr. Atkinson of Leeds, the

principal manager of the Elland fund, whose conduct towards him had been, from the very first, paternal. At Carlisle he was introduced by the Dean to his brother, that eminent servant of God, the author of the History of the church of Christ. Of him he could say ‘*tantum vidi.*’ But the interview, brief as it was, was calculated to infix an abiding impression; for shortly after this Mr. Milner exchanged the tabernacle in which he had here groaned for the glorious liberty of the children of God. This was a time of great privation to our church, more than one bright luminary in our ecclesiastical heavens being darkened. Mr. Cadogan, in the early part of this year, Mr. Milner, in the latter, were consigned to the tomb. Yet, as if to repair these desolations, at His bidding who restores the face of the earth, the seeds of the Church Missionary Society were cast into the ground and began to vegetate. ‘You do not, perhaps know the business’ he wrote to his mother, ‘that brought Mr. Simcon to London. He went to consult Mr. Wilberforce about instituting a missionary society. The committee is already appointed, they will meet in November, a plan will be submitted to the public, and solicitations made for subscriptions.’ Behold here the germ of that institution, the design of which is identical with that which brought the Son of God from heaven, and which, if contrasted with any

project terminating on this side the grave, is 'as the sun shining in the circuit of the heavens compared with those flickering sparks that glitter and vanish in the embers serving only to amuse the child. What this society has already done will be known in eternity : and there, alas ! will it be known also what it might have effected had no corrupt formality, no spurious charity, no worldly apathy, no unauthorised speculation, no mistaken prejudices, curtailed its exertions.

By Mr. Milner's death a lectureship at Hull, as well as the Mastership of the Grammar-school in that town, became vacant. Mr. Thomason's friends, therefore, recommended his offering himself as his successor, and the Dean of Carlisle threw his powerful interest into the balance suspended between Mr. Thomason and a fellow of St. John's. The scale inclined eventually against Mr. Thomason, the inclination being determined by a single vote given, as was afterwards learnt, by mere caprice. ' I begin to be more reconciled to my late disappointment. I see it is the will of God, and am contented ; my situation here is in all respects most important ; would I were more sensible of my privileges, and more careful to improve them.' Thus in the last month of the year 1797, did he comment on his failure ; proving how habitual was his recognition of the inspired declaration, ' The lot is cast into

the lap, but the whole disposing of it is of the Lord.'

In the year 1798, the tutorship in Queen's College was consigned to Mr. Thomason. Two public and two private lectures, consequently, were his daily allotment of duty, and in the necessary absence of Mr. Simeon, five sermons also in the week devolved upon him. No one could long bear up under fatigue so exhausting, nor would he in the present altered circumstances of the university have been subjected to the labour of five sermons, though he might still have been exposed to that of four lectures. It can hardly be credited how difficult in those days it was to obtain a substitute in Mr. Simeon's church. Those who worshipped there were supposed to have left common sense, discretion, sobriety, attachment to the establishment, a love for the liturgy, and almost whatever else is true and of good report, in the vestibule. What an abandonment of reputation then was it to officiate there, and what wonder if Mr. Simeon being absent, upon Mr. Thomason *alone* the weekly supply of five sermons should have rested. It was while sustaining this ministerial pressure, that a letter reached him, from the pen of his earliest friend and adviser, replete with salutary cautions respecting the temptations incident to his station. Eagle eyed for him on all occasions, she might have feared the effects of



excess in writing sermons and in preaching. She might have been alarmed lest he should be *casting* the net so often as to allow no time for *mending* it. She might have dreaded a rapid, heartless fluency, superseding that unction and solidity, that pathos and solemnity of address, when the preacher speaks, as if he saw the face of God. But it was danger on another quarter that she seems chiefly to have apprehended. That spirit of worldly self-indulgence, which not only may co-exist with, but which often grows out of literary labours. ‘Dear Mrs. Thornton has written me a long letter, the pages crowded, the expressions exceedingly friendly. She cautions me to be circumspect, to be aware of dead calms that come over the Christian in his way heaven-ward. I have only one weapon to use—Prayer.’ What have we here but a verification of the Proverb—“As an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover to an obedient ear.” A tutor and a minister receives meekly and gratefully the advice of an aged Christian woman. How demonstrative of the high tone of religious practice in both parties. To warn Mr. Thomason of snares in his path, or of faults in his conduct, was to rise the higher in his estimation and attachment: he was not one of that class who are loud in their confessions of depravity and fallibility, and yet in point of fact lay claim to exemption from

all actual errors: knowing he was in the midst of many dangers, he welcomed any admonition that, under God, might contribute to his security. ‘How much I am obliged to you,’ he writes in reply, ‘for your long and kind letter! It came at a time when I greatly stood in need of something to awaken me to a sense of the great importance of my situation here, and of the diligence with which I should prosecute my work. I wish to consider the ministry as *the primary object* I should keep in view, and the work of a tutor as a part, a very important part, of that primary object. If it were not for this, I should be labouring over my lectures as a shoemaker over his last, considering it merely as a drudgery to which I am called: but by considering it a part of the ministerial labour, I not only go through it with pleasure, but I endeavour the more to aim at the communication of what is truly useful.

There are reasons for fearing the ‘mathematical religion’ which so prevails here. However, I do not find this to be *my besetting danger*. There are other things connected with college infinitely more poisonous than this,—at least to me. Here is every thing that can contribute to the ease and comfort of life. Whatever pampers the appetite and administers fuel to sloth and indolence is to be found in abundance. Nothing is left to want or desire. Here is the danger, this is the hor-

rible precipice: when you think of me, think of this danger, and fear this fear above all others.'

In the vacation of this summer, Mr. Thomason visited the spot where the ground-work of his unexpected prosperity had been laid. And how could the sight of Chesham fail of bringing the past and the present into most affecting contrast. Had Mr. Clark not been numbered amongst the dead, his return there would have been attended with pleasure unmingled. The scene would have resembled the summer sea, when gently agitated by the breeze, it seems to smile with its unnumbered waves: but that place now presented another appearance; the surface of things there was dark and perturbed. Memory was painfully active at Chesham: Emotions were awakened within its borders, which he must have lived a very short time in this world of woe, or to very little purpose, who cannot comprehend. He thus gives us the impression which local recollections produced on his heart. 'I preached at Missenden, where I used to attend on Sunday in the morning. The common I crossed and recrossed: it is a sweet spot: but a gloom pervades the neighbourhood. I visited the rooms where I have spent so many hours; the walks I have so often trodden; the woods where I have wandered with so much pleasure. But every thing I saw appeared to

mourn their loss. If such be Chesham without the presence of Mr. Clark, what would the universe be without God—what my soul without the influence of his spirit. I went to Amersham to visit my old school-fellow, and we walked to Chesham. Hitherto I had seen the place alone: how were my feelings increased when in company with one who, like myself, loved and admired Mr. Clark, and who, like myself, had not visited the scene of his youthful labours for several years. R. and I always read together; we studied the same books with a constancy that surprises me when I look back. Do you remember that walk, that lane, that gate: we could only ask such questions all the way. We came to my lodgings; of the family one is a soldier, another dead, the rest scattered; except those too young to know their wants or how to relieve them. The father and mother could only tell us what we had seen engraven on every house and tree, that since our dear tutor was removed the glory of the place was gone. We walked on through the fields, to that spot where we have so often heard our tutor hold forth a remedy to a wretched world. At Bois church we stopped to meditate on the past and to weep. When we stood over the vault where the dear ashes were deposited, we were almost overpowered. We looked at the grass with which the place was

overgrown, and sighed. I ran to the window of the chancel to see my old seat, and returned to the grave. *At length we tore ourselves away.*'

Reflections such as these évince beyond contradiction that whatever the tendency of worldly happiness to deteriorate the religious principle, whatever that of collegiate pursuits, to deaden sensibility, neither of these effects had followed in the case before us. Here we have nature in its genuine actings, grace in its purity and power.

At the close of this year, 1798, Mr. Thomason was admitted to the office of a presbyter in the Church of England by Dr. Cornwallis, bishop of Litchfield and Coventry. In his set work as deacon he had been sanctified in holiness and had well performed that preparatory office. His Sundays had been to him days of spiritual refreshment, and for them he could bless God. The ignorance that prevailed around him he did not witness without many a sigh; nor did those sighs resemble the yawnings of oscitancy, they led to labor and to prayer. In these petitions, his country, then threatened from without and within, as well as the church and neighbourhood in immediate contact with him, had a share. Every Monday morning a meeting was held in Cambridge to entreat God in behalf of the nation, endangered by the rejection of Mr. Wilberforce's motion for the abolition of the slave trade, by the

profanation of the sabbath, and by many other grievous sins: amongst these supplicants Mr. Thomason gladly bent his knees. ‘I am engaged in the service of one who can give strength to the weak, and light to the ignorant. He has strengthened me, and I trust will be with me to the end.’ With prayers for himself of this nature, grounded in humility, and crowned with merciful answers, he stretched forth his hand towards the staves of the ark:—more than ever conscious of the height of the dignity, as well as of the arduousness of the duty to which he had been called; deeply convinced that ‘there was nothing noble in a clergyman but a burning zeal for the salvation of souls, nor anything mean in him but idleness and a worldly spirit:’<sup>1</sup> in lowliness acknowledging “who is sufficient for these things,” yet upheld by the cheering assurance, “Lo I am with you always,” he prepared for his ordination. Aaron, before he was invested with the priesthood, lay seven days at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and before he ministered to the people, he made an application of the atonement to himself. Mr. Thomason was of a similar spirit; nor could words better express his state of mind,—his contrition,—confidence, and consolation, than the hymn, entitled ‘*Aaron*,’ by George Herbert.

<sup>1</sup> *Law quoted by Dr Johnson.*

This important ecclesiastical step was followed by one of a domestic character. In the month of January, 1799, Mr. Thomason was united to Miss Fawcet, of Scaleby Castle, a union conducive as much to his spiritual as to his temporal happiness. In her he found an affectionate sharer in all his joys and cares ; a cordial coadjutor in his parochial employments. ‘ Vixerunt mirâ concordia per mutuam caritatem et invicem se antepponendo.’ Such was the tenor of their lives from the altar to the grave. ‘ One thing I may mention, (to the honour of Mr. and Mrs. Thomason,)’ Mr. Simeon writes, ‘ that in all the ten years I lived under their roof, I never heard on any occasion an angry word from either of them ; nor ever saw a different countenance in either of them towards the other, or in either of them towards me.’ Concerning her at a later period, another friend, who had good opportunities of information, testifies,—‘ She was ever active, but never hurried ;—her collectedness, self-possession, and power of diverting her mind from one set of cares to impose it on another, were, I should think, unparalleled. Self seemed annihilated,—she lived for the happiness of others ; wherever she went she was hailed as

One richly blessing and so richly blessed.’

From these testimonies we may pronounce

Mr. Thomason 'richly blessed' in her whom he brought with him from the North to Cambridge.

Dr. Buchanan's advice to married persons, 'to be tenderly communicative with each other on spiritual subjects,' was in perfect harmony with the views and conduct of this Christian couple. Every morning and evening, according to a rule laid down, they engaged together in private devotional reading; so anxious were they, to use the words of one of them, 'to improve the time they were to be together on earth in securing a better habitation and more glorious union in heaven.' That their household was ordered upon Christian principles it is almost needless to state; the family altar was erected and honoured: the pupils under Mr. Thomason's care, and the servants under his roof, were assembled around it as often as the day began and closed. There they heard what God the Lord had spoken in his holy word—there they praised him for their common mercies, and prayed to him under a sense of their common necessities.

It is the remark of a divine in days departed, that events bright and joyous are followed frequently by others of a lowering aspect. Experience sanctions the observation—conscience discerns the reasonableness and goodness of the appointment. When the firmament over us is serene and the hours seem too short for our



felicity, our affections are ready to cleave to earth rather than soar to heaven. How needful then that clouds should cover the expanse, and that our heavenly Father should speak, commanding us to hear his beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased. Often had Mrs. Thornton proved a monitor, faithful and effectual, to Mr. Thomason. Repeatedly had she called him—never in vain, from the turbid and uncertain streams of created comforts to the pure and perennial fountain of living waters. Her admonitions, delivered in the spirit of love, were received and acted upon in a correspondent temper. But now from the chamber of sickness and decay she addressed the object of her Christian and beneficent care in another manner. Her illness commenced shortly after his marriage,—her death, or rather translation into life, quickly followed. These were events, eloquent in proclaiming in Mr. Thomason's ears the poverty and frailty of human joys, the all-satisfying and enduring nature of those pleasures which flow from that throne whence angels drink in their pure and never-ending felicity. Of the concluding portion of the life of this most excellent lady, an account has been drawn up, and blended as her name is with that of Mr. Thomason, pre-eminent as she was as a servant of Jesus, the writer of these pages gratefully avails himself of the permission granted

him of enriching the memoir of one whom Mrs. Thornton loved and befriended, with some of her dying testimonies. No reader it is hoped will deem them irrelevant: no Christian will fail of appreciating their exalted spirituality.

In January, 1799, the year and the month of Mr. Thomason's accession of earthly bliss, Mrs. Thornton was removed to Bath in a state of languishing, from which she never recovered. Arriving there, she observed that 'she had left home under a sentence of death, but that she felt a sweet composure, being in her Lord's hands.'— Her complaints increasing, in the presence of some friends who came to visit her, she was enabled to testify that 'she had not followed cunningly devised fables, but blessed realities, which then yielded divine support. *My illness, said she, has been a pleasant time. I am thankful that I am not to live here always. I look forward with joy to the world to come.* I have thought much of, and have felt great nearness to, my friends who have already gained the port. It often seems as if a group of them were ready to receive me. Blessed be God, I can readily leave all my dear friends and relatives, if he call me. My children I dearly love, but I am willing to leave them. I hope they will follow me to heaven. I have endeavoured to recommend the best things, and can only lament that I have not

set them a better example. But if any infirmity or sin they have seen in me have proved a hinderance to them, I pray God to take the remembrance of it from their mind, and enable them to look to the perfect pattern.'—A few days after, breaking out in the words of Isaiah, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God, speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem," (Isaiah xl. 1.) she proceeded in this strain, 'What condescension in God, thus to address his creatures! The Bible is the best book. It is the truth. Lately I have read little else; and should I live, it shall be my *one* book. It contains every thing. I feel my weakness, and it calls upon me to trust in the Lord Jehovah, for in him is everlasting strength. I do not know what our Lord is about to do with me. I grow weaker; if he takes me home, it will be from the evil to come. If he should spare me, I trust it will be to bring me to a nearer acquaintance with himself.'—Having desired a friend to read Isaiah xxvith, and pray with her: 'It seemed,' said she, 'like worshipping before the throne. *How near is earth to heaven?*' One of her daughters, who was nursing her, received from her lips this deeply touching address, 'You have nursed me affectionately, and now you are called to an affecting scene, a dying mother parting with a child she dearly loves. After I am gone, and you retire in secret to weep, per-

haps your mother may be looking on. I charge you, and your dear sisters, let not a thought enter your minds, that you have neglected any thing that could have been done for me. You have all been kind, I have had every attention shown that could have been given. The Lord bless you all ! I hope you will always love each other. Do not expect too much from each other, then you will live in love ;’ and after a short silence, ‘ the mystery of the cross contains our all of good. Our Redeemer, our great Deliverer, is our Surety and our Peace. He hath broken down the partition-wall. *I have no hope, no plea, but, Lord, thou hast died ;*’ and to her daughter, ‘ Oh M. he must be your salvation : expect only to be saved through him !’ Her husband, who had hastened to her from a distance, in the midst of his sorrow was welcomed and cheered with this triumphant assurance, •

‘ Not a doubt doth arise to darken my skies,  
Or hide for a moment my God from my eyes.’

All her daughters, collected around her, had the high privilege of hearing their mother thus address them : ‘ Faith apprehends realities. Faith opens the world to come. This life is but the beginning of our existence. When we begin to live here, we begin to die ; and when we die (in the faith,) we enter into a full enjoyment of the

blessed realities which faith now apprehends. Oh may the Holy Spirit impress these truths upon your hearts, my dear children! Without his influence, all is nothing.' Then, leaning her head back, she said, 'Lord! now take me to thyself. Let me depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. Lord Jesus receive my spirit.' Again they listened to these animating words. 'God has been better to me than my fears. You little expected to see your dying mother with so little fear. I have had many fears, (alluding to a complaint which threatened her with painful consequences for many years) but my Lord has been good to me. My fears drove me to prayer; and what pain I did feel has often drawn me nearer to my God. Dr. L. brought me good news when he told me I was going home to my God. Lord, suffer me not to be impatient; thy time is best, thy will be done!' When informed that Mrs. F. had sent her kind sympathizing love, she was a while silent; and then said, 'Did Mrs. F. send a message to me?' On being answered 'Yes,' she said, 'I love her: the very hearing of her name revives me. We know little of the value of love here, to what we shall in eternity.' To a young friend who visited her, she uttered this humble, solemn, awakening exhortation, 'You see me weak in body, but my mind is vigorous. Though I do not think any

thing I am able to say can have much weight as coming from me, yet I wished to see you. Yours is a singular family. God has given great talents to you all, and it is true wisdom to know the part we are called to act, and to fulfil it. We are little aware of the loss we shall sustain if we do not properly fill up the place for which we are fitted. I have had awful views of this, such views as have influenced my intentions. I have aimed at using what was committed to me, to the glory of God: and though I have fallen far short of my aim, yet I am now thankful that my endeavours were directed to what, at this important moment, my mind fully approves. I am a weak helpless creature, and do not speak because I have filled my place, or done the work assigned me. No: I have only aimed at it. I speak because of the sluggishness of my nature, and because I wish every one had a proper sense of the increasing enjoyment they may gain by a right use of their time and talents. The necessity of this appears from the apostle's words, Press towards the mark; covet earnestly the best gifts: and from our Lord's account of the ten virgins. They were all intrusted with talents, all had light, and all had gifts, but five were wise and five were foolish. The former improved, the latter neglected their talents. You are engaged in a good work, may you go on and prosper. If he that giveth a cup

of cold water shall not lose his reward, the service of those who seek the spiritual good of their fellow creatures shall surely be remembered. God is faithful : I am a poor worm, but I have found him so beyond what I have hoped. Often in my chamber have I prayed,

‘ When pain o’er my weak flesh prevails,  
With saint-like patience arm my breast ;  
When wounding grief my soul assails,  
In lowly weakness may I rest.’

‘ I have had a strong assurance that it would be so ; insomuch that I have often returned to my knees to thank God for what I believed he would do. I have often poured forth my soul in prayer respecting the hour which now draws near. I had reason to believe he would be with me ; and now he is answering my faith. Does it not amount to a certainty ? *Spiritual things are realities. Faith produces effects.* God is faithful ‘to his word.’ Then turning to her children, she said, ‘ My dear children, let no one cheat you out of immortality.’

Of one who in his early days used to leave all the comforts of life to go to seek lost sinners, she remarked, ‘ If we leave our comfortable homes, warm fire-sides, and go to seek souls, or to hear the word of God, *it will bear reflecting on in such an hour as this I am passing through.*’ Near midnight she was in great pain, and prayed

most fervently that our Lord would take her to himself. Complaining of the room being dark, and being told that there were candles in it, and that it was owing to her illness that she did not see the light, 'I am glad you tell me so,' said she; 'I hope it is a proof that I am not far from my heavenly inheritance. I hope, if one of my natural senses is closed, it is a prelude to my spiritual senses being more fully opened; perhaps it may be soon:' her desire was fulfilled not long after this, with the words of the Lord's prayer on her lips and in her heart, she slept in Jesus, and made one of the countless company in heaven. In her natural as well as spiritual character there was something extraordinary. Remarkable also were the means of her conversion. At the age of *nineteen she received her first abiding religious impressions from attending the daily prayers at Westminster Abbey*. Her heavenly Father employed the solemn words of our excellent church service enriched with 'the pealing organ and full-voiced choir,' to awaken her to serious inquiry after salvation. She is described as having possessed a good understanding, a strong memory, and a vigorous mind, much improved by reading and reflection. She is also said to have had a peculiar talent of raising the tone of conversation, of checking levity, of drawing out the powers of strong minds, and raising those of the weak,



and to have manifested a striking elevation and dignity, combined with simplicity, in her manner and language. She lived, it is truly added, as becometh a saint, aiming to regulate her temper and conduct by the precepts and examples of her Lord; and she died as becometh a Christian, renouncing her own righteousness, and simply relying upon Him who was made sin for us, though he “knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

‘What a friend have I lost!’ was the mournful reflection of Mr. Thomason. ‘Not a day passes but I think of her with grateful recollection, and of the mercies I have received through her. My earnest prayer is, that I may be directed in that way in which she was so anxious I should be found.’

## CHAPTER V.

THE Spring of the year 1800 opened upon Mr. Thomason with an accumulation of joys and comforts. He was united to a woman of singular sweetness and piety ; was acquainted for the first time, with the new and thrilling delight of a parent ; was admitted to the highest order in the ministry, to which he looked forward ; was settled in a pleasant village, the simple-minded inhabitants of which were attached to him personally and for his work's sake : to crown all, he had for a very frequent inmate Mr. Simeon, endeared to him more and more by kindnesses without end and of every degree, by those substantial acts, for the occasions of which love is wont to wait with a look of vigilance and delicacy of tact peculiar to itself, by those also which constitute the daily and ordinary currency of familiar intercourse. Nor was this all ;—for in Mr. Simeon he had before him a living example of an elevated description, ever seeming to suggest this is not your rest, you are not come to the land of which the Lord God has said, “ He will give it you.”

‘Do you remember a very pleasant spot, where there are two bridges, and you have a sweet view on both sides? Close to that spot is our mansion; the walks extend down to the river. A more beautiful place I never saw: it is the garden of Cambridgeshire. When I look around me, it seems a dream: I can scarcely persuade myself it belongs to me. If you think of me between the hours of twelve and two, you may imagine me walking in the shrubbery with my little Hebrew Bible in my hand. Should the sun be very hot, depend upon it, I have taken my seat under the shade of a thick chesnut; there I endeavour to collect my thoughts and stir myself up to diligent improvement and application of the word of God. But, alas! I find it easier to admire the landscape around me, than to raise my heart to Him who made it; easier to thank him for the walks and gardens, than to besiege a throne of grace for spiritual blessings: yet these are what I earnestly long for, and without which my soul cannot be satisfied. Mr. Simcon has a room on the ground floor, which opens into a delightful pleasure garden, surrounded by a wall, where he can walk privately, in which he so much delights. One door of his room opens into my study, so that we are as near each other as possible. His friendship I must name amongst my chief blessings: he is more and more dear to us, as indeed he ought to

be ; his kindness to us is wonderful. It quite overpowers me when I think of it. I hope we shall provoke one another more and more to abound in the work of the Lord. O how short is time ! I am sure there is no time for idleness : would to God that the preciousness of each passing hour might be more deeply impressed upon my mind.

‘ It has pleased God to send us pious servants ; indeed our domestic comforts are invaluable ; our seasons of family prayer are seasons of refreshment. I have found my own mind stirred up to make them as profitable as possible.’

Who can read these accounts, the overflowings of a son’s heart into a mother’s bosom, without confessing that it would have been difficult to point out any spot where more real bliss, earthly and heavenly, was concentrated than at Shelford. Could the walls of that house speak, and were the trees in those grounds vocal, they could tell of many hymns sung, of many prayers poured forth, of much divine meditation and discourse, concerning the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Who remembers not the heavenly conversation between St. Augustine and Monica, just before her admission to glory ? Communications of this sublime and spiritual nature, passed often within that favoured enclosure.

In addition to these various enjoyments, Mr. Thomason possessed at this moment the gratifi-

cation of having a new and most valuable fellow-labourer in the ministry at Cambridge. The Rev. Mr. Sowerby, who had reached the extreme summit of mathematical merit, and who afterwards sustained the office of moderator with singular satisfaction to the students, and no small credit to himself, became at this time an assistant to Mr. Simeon in Trinity Church. Once he had beheld that church through a fallacious medium. A prediction that he himself would one day officiate there would have been deemed by him an absurdity so improbable as to be ludicrous—so offensive as to be almost an insult.

On one occasion he did venture within its walls, and returning with a conscience in some degree roused, and with a mind at once reflecting and resisting, he met providentially with a friend, who with combined ability, discretion, affection, and eventual success, combated his objections. ‘He called upon me one Sunday evening,’ this friend relates, ‘a few weeks before his degree, and began to tell me of a sermon which he had heard at Mr. Simeon’s, where he had gone chiefly from curiosity. I assured him that he had misunderstood Mr. Simeon—that his report was altogether incorrect—that it arose from his never having considered the subject at all. This led to a long discussion, during which he became very calm and serious, and much interested; we went

down to supper in the hall continuing our conversation, but so much were we engaged in it, we stopped in the court, (I could point out the very place,) and were so deep in discussion that we lost our suppers; the result was, that I undertook to produce a series of scriptural passages which should shew what Mr. Simeon *did* mean, and *which would prove that he was right*. In two or three days I did so, and in two or three days more he told me he had been much struck by our conversation, and by the passages which I had put into his hand; that this was a subject which demanded thoughtful inquiry; that he had not then leisure, as degree time was just upon him, but that he would examine the scriptures carefully after his degree. He went into Cumberland in the summer, and at length came a letter telling me that he saw his error, and that the doctrine of Mr. Simeon was the truth of God's word.'

Short was that course on which Mr. Sowerby, in conjunction with Mr. Thomason, now entered. The hidden and inextinguishable sparks of consumption were burning within; and that disease, after no very long delay, manifested itself, proving to be an angel charged to introduce the Christian sufferer to a state of being for which his meetness was most clear; for who loved more unfeignedly than he?—who whilst he was able, preached more

faithfully those truths which tend to 'humble the sinner, to exalt the Saviour, and to promote holiness?'<sup>1</sup> So soon did Mr. Sowerby sink, that when Mr. Thomason was hastening to his final destination, that friend who had been instrumental *in leading him into the way of peace witnessed the proof of that peace on the bed of languishing, and in a dying hour, and found that indeed it passed all understanding.* 'Throughout the whole of his illness, 'he states' his Christian patience and Christian fortitude were very conspicuous: not a complaint escaped him; and when a concern was expressed at the length and severity of his sufferings, he replied by observing that he ought rather to be thankful as he had been favoured with time for reviewing his past life, and had derived benefit from affliction. His strength was so much exhausted, he seldom spake except in monosyllables; but the little he could articulate shewed how well he was prepared for his approaching change. So long as he was able to read, the Bible was almost constantly in his hand, and he frequently appeared to be engaged in prayer. The fourteenth and seventeenth chapters of St. John were peculiarly pleasing to him. On the night preceding his

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Simeon's admirable preface to his 'Helps to Composition,' in which, with a firm hand and an enlightened eye, he holds the balances of the sanctuary between the Calvinist and the Arminian.

death he was almost perpetually employed in devotion. In the morning he hastily caught the hand of an attendant who was standing by his bed, and smiling, pointed to a chair, adding the word ‘down,’—in an instant the awful change *began to take place*, and, without a sigh or a groan, *he breathed his last.*’

Mr. Thomason’s clerical salary, liberal as it was in itself, was slender relatively,—he had of course lost his fellowship, and the principal part of his wife’s dowry were her numerous excellences. An attempt therefore to prosecute his ministerial labours, without continuing those of a tutor, seemed scarcely practicable. Other reasons also besides those of prudence were in action; and if St. Paul were to be admired whilst occupied in making tents, that he might not be burdensome to the Corinthians, *similar motives* will render Mr. Thomason worthy of admiration when engaged in the work of education. ‘To-morrow we sit down to our school-work. I feel a sort of tremor over me, looking forward to the labors of the half-year.’ Thus he writes;—and in encountering this toil, his generous spirit had other views beyond those of mere maintenance. Remembering what a sum had been expended upon himself—calling to mind the wants of young men involved in those anxious exigencies which he had experienced—he *resolved to repay the whole*



*of what had been advanced for his support*; and long before he left England these noble resolutions were fulfilled to the very utmost. Having saved above four hundred pounds, not to exonerate himself from the burden of an obligation, but to enjoy the luxury of performing what is lovely and of good report, he replaced the money in the hands of the managers of the Elland Institution, with a willing consciousness that a debt still remained that could not be cancelled.

The principles on which Mr. Thomason engaged in the toils of tutorship have been developed : a real Christian himself, he was *a Christian* instructor. The system pursued in many instances, by preceptors calling themselves Christians, is the purest paganism. His plan was conducted with an honest sense of what was due to the parent who placed a child under his care, with a still more serious conviction of his responsibility to God. Concerning one of his pupils he thus expresses himself—‘ He is one out of twelve precious souls committed to my charge. I sink under my work, and feel as if the task of forming the tender mind to principles of religion were an Herculean labour too mighty for so feeble an arm as mine. But I am endeavouring to look upward for them and for myself, and pray that the Lord would pardon what has been amiss and strengthen my extreme weakness.’

Notwithstanding his labours in the pupil-room, his frequent visits to the sick-chamber, his public lectures weekly to the people at large, and those free and familiar ones which he was in the habit of giving to the children, Mr. Thomason found time to write again for the Norrision prizes, during the first two years of his residence at Shelford. His first essay was to shew ‘that the Christian religion has in its effects been favourable to human happiness,’—his second was to prove ‘that the differences of opinion amongst Christians was no proof against Christianity :’ *both were successful.*

That ministerial employment was Mr. Thomason’s primary concern,—that he possessed a pastor’s heart, no one can better testify than Mr. Simeon, who, concerning the fervent love and persevering energy of his fellow-worker, bears this striking testimony, his words are—‘The parishes in which Mr. and Mrs. Thomason were able to exert their influence seemed as their own family,—schools of industry, as well as other schools, were established by them—the poor and the sick were visited and relieved—all that Christian love could plan and devise was planned and executed with the tenderest assiduity and most unwearied constancy. If I were to fix on one thing more than another, where Mr. Thomason was at home, it was in his Sunday evening

and Tuesday evening lectures, in his school-room. *There the poor were permitted to come, and he was as a father amongst his children, or a pastor amongst his flock.* In his addresses there was an unrivalled simplicity and divine unction, which left a savour that is not forgotten to this hour. The name of Thomason in Shelford and Stapleford is remembered like that of Swartz in Tanjore and Trichenopoly, and I doubt not but to all eternity many will have reason to bless God for his affectionate ministrations.'

Though Mr. Thomason's field of exertion lay principally in Shelford, and in another village at no great distance, he was still in the habit of preaching often in Trinity Church, Cambridge. The congregation there every year was increased by an accession of young men, who in defiance of frowns on the one hand, and of ridicule on the other, persisted in their attendance, where they first perhaps perceived the clear radiance of truth, or were taught at least to walk in its light. There in the year 1802 ministerial vigilance was eminently needed, and was eminently exhibited. To beguile any who might be unstable, an Antinomian preacher came to Cambridge, and spread his net. In vain however was that net spread. The ministers appointed to watch over those upon whom the attempt was made, held that heresy in the most intense abomination,

and *they well understood how to contend against it.* ‘If a *libertine* preach free grace,’ says *Baxter*, ‘do you preach it up more effectually than he,—be much upon it, and make it more glorious on right grounds than he can do on his wrong.’

Thus was error, in this instance, opposed and vanquished: the perverter of truth, found none, or scarcely any whom he could pervert in that flock over which Mr. Simeon, Mr. Martyn, and Mr. Thomason, were jealous with a godly jealousy, lest any should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ: he soon therefore departed to some other spot, where the shepherds, being less faithful or less wise, the wolf with the wool around him might gain admission to the fold.

Meetings of Christians, for the purposes of mutual encouragement and information, are obviously so excellent, that they have been recommended by some who may be supposed to verge to the *extreme* of caution. ‘I see no reason,’ says Mr. Nelson, in his preface to the *Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England*, ‘why men may not meet and consult together to improve one another in Christian knowledge, and by mutual advice take measures how best to further their own salvation, as well as promote that of their neighbours, when the same liberty is taken

for the improvement of trade, and for carrying on the pleasures and diversions of life.'

The blessed results of social prayer—and perusal of the word of God—of intercommunity of sentiment amongst those who have the same sacred and most awful charge—the benefits of discussing *difficulties of interpretation and conduct*—of communicating common fears and hopes—infirmities and temptations — comforts and supports—to be understood fully must be experienced. Yet there is something, one should think, upon the very surface of such a design, sufficient to secure it from the suspicion of an empty assumption of authority or of contemptuous pretences to sanctity. The practice commends itself at once as congenial to the genius of the church of England, and to the general spirit of Christianity. But the more primitive, unexceptionable, and *spiritually* beneficial any proceeding may be, the more surely does it give rise to marked opposition or unkind insinuation, from that class who are full of incessant alarms lest falsefire should inflame the zeal of others, but are seldom apprehensive lest the frost should get into their own charity.

At these clerical meetings Mr. Thomason became a regular attendant, with increasing interest and profit. One of the first at which he was present, was to him more than commonly gratifying: as the clergy assembled under the roof of his

old and beloved college friend, Mr. Jerram. Having tasted the pleasures of this intercourse, he was not long in opening his own house for the reception of his brethren ; many of whom came from a great distance, deeming their trouble repaid amply by this conference of minds," this communion of hearts. ' One of my most pleasing recollections of him,' *Dr. Steinkopff* writes, ' is my meeting him about twenty-five years ago, when he was curate of Shelford. At his house a clerical meeting was held once a year, which was attended by about fifteen or twenty clergymen. Being privileged to be one of the occasional visitors, I cannot describe the benefit, instruction, and happiness which I enjoyed. It was the delight of Mr. and Mrs. Thomason to receive their Christian friends, and a spirit of devotion, peaceful serenity, and Christian cheerfulness prevailed in their hospitable mansion, which has left an indelible impression on my mind.'

It is observable that one of the heaviest afflictions that ever descended upon Jacob, came upon him *after* he had reformed the disorder of his household at Bethel, when his tent was pitched beyond the tower of Edar. Some sorrows are to correct the offences, others to invigorate the graces of the children of God. Under this latter aspect, it ought not to seem strange that Mr. Thomason, for the first three years of his abode

at Shelford, was exercised with severe domestic trials. ‘Three successive springs,’ he writes in *Feb. 1803*, ‘*God has visited us with the rod; surely these afflictions spring not out of the dust: may they be sanctified to us both! O that we may become more alive to God!*’ One of these dispensations was the death of an infant son, of which he thus pathetically and piously speaks.— ‘Our dearest child was buried in the church-yard near the house. The mother can see the endeared spot from the little window in the parlour as she sits at work. There its remains are deposited. Who can tell the agony of separation but those who have felt it. Well, it is now past, and we can adore the hand, I hope, that strikes our comforts dead.’ These visitations were of a quickening nature, as in a peculiar sense were some others which, in the midst of his earthly joys, cried loudly in his ears, “All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field.” Of this number were the early removal of two sons of Mr. Hey, of Leeds, one of whom had been curate to Mr. Simeon, and the decease of his father-in-law: but these were Christian deaths; declaring most intelligibly, “the word of our God endureth for ever.”

Nothing, till the year 1805, occurred to disturb the peaceful uniformity of Mr. Thomason’s days, during the whole of which he may be described

as being at the palm trees and wells of Elim. With the exception of the trials that have been mentioned, his happiness was unusually great: *so much so that he suspected it had in some measure encroached upon the temper befitting a pilgrim and stranger.* Often whilst walking in the grounds that so charmed him at Shelford, did he think of those who were enduring hardness for Christ, preaching his name amidst privations and perils; and he would accuse himself of a disposition to softness and self-indulgence. There were two proximate causes of a revival of that missionary spirit in Mr. Thomason, which had nearly carried him out of England before he took his degree. One of these was a review he undertook, in the Christian Observer, of Nott's Bampton Lectures, which necessarily led to a close consideration of Wesley's and Whitfield's devotedness in their Saviour's service;—for after every abatement which candour must concede or prejudice may demand, their determination of soul in the highest cause was entire and amazing: the other was the intended departure of Henry Martyn from his native land, to preach the gospel to those wretched men who had never heard the joyful sound.

The previous year Mr. Thomason had enrolled himself a member in the British and Foreign Bible Society, then beginning its glorious and



gigantic career; this year he resolved under God, with the Bible in his hand, and his Saviour in his heart, to go where the darkness was dense, and the sphere extensive for the diffusion of light. In the spring of 1805, Mr. Simeon visited London, to impart Mr. Thomason's intentions to Mr. Grant; but at that time there was no opening towards the East Indies, where it was thought most advisable for him either to accompany or to follow Henry Martyn.

A resolution such as Mr. Thomason had now adopted was manifestly one of sharp conflict, and sacrifice. The following extracts from his letters shew that the cost was heavy, but that it was counted humbly and deliberately, both by himself and by those whom the measure most sensibly affected. Referring to the Review of Nott's Lectures, March 6, 1805, he thus addressed his mother—

‘ One good effect has already been produced on my mind,—an increased and painful sense that I am doing nothing to any good purpose. The reading the life and labours of those excellent ministers, fills me with admiration of their zeal, and with shame that I am such a blank in creation. My sphere is contracted, and I long for a more extensive field of labour. God has given me an education and a spirit, I trust, which might render me far more useful in the

church than I now am. Where my present thoughts will lead me, I know not; but I look round upon this lovely spot with all the indifference of a man who would, with the greatest cheerfulness, part with all if a situation of greater usefulness, however laborious, should offer itself. Here I am. ‘Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?’

‘But more of this at a future time; in the mean time let us both remember,—you, that you have frequently devoted me to God,—and I, that I have professedly done so for years,—and that, as a redeemed creature, I ought to be presenting my body a living sacrifice to God.’

To her who was ready again to give up her son, but whose heart was rent with inexpressible pangs at the very thought of it, Mr. Simcon wrote in terms of sympathy most tender, and self-renunciation unreserved.

‘Your letter fills me with deep concern, and I am extremely anxious to remove, as far as possible, the load from your mind. To convey on paper all that I have to say, would be tedious. I have judged it better, therefore, to set off instantly, for the purpose of making known to you every thing that has arisen, and precisely as it has arisen; and at the same time, to mention some circumstances which, in all probability, will operate to prevent the execution of the plan your

son proposed when he saw you last. From the beginning I have endeavoured to yield to no bias, but to suggest every thing as it occurred to my mind. I have, in this respect, manifested disinterestedness, at all events; for next to yourself there certainly is no person living who would *feel his loss so much as I*. Indeed, I can *scarcely yield to you in this particular; for* though your sensibilities are *beyond all comparison more exquisite than mine*, and your bereavement would be more pungent, your habits of life would remain the same; whereas mine would be wholly changed. I should lose not only a dear friend, but the friend with whom I live in daily habits of communion: the friend that is as my own soul. I know no loss that would come so near to my feelings, or leave such a blank in my life. Should I be called to bear the loss, I hope that grace will be given me suitably to improve it. I trust that you also, if such an event should take place, will be enabled to adopt the resolution of a widowed lady, who lost her only three children, one after the other, in quick succession, "I see that God is determined to have my whole heart, and so he shall."

The humility which pervades the following letter from Mr. Thomason to his mother, written on Easter-day, 1805, cannot be misunderstood

by the Christian reader ; nor need any one be told that however Mr. Simeon concurred with the writer in the interpretation of God's providence at the present juncture, he dissented wholly from his self-condemnatory reflections and inferences.

‘ Yesterday evening Mr. Simeon communicated *the result of his communication with Mr. Grant. The inference is so decisive in his mind and mine,* that I do not lose a moment in informing you of it. It appears evident that a minister who is not calculated for usefulness at home, will never become useful abroad ; and that change of place or employment cannot of itself quicken the soul which for eight years has been sleeping over its labours. I feel the truth of this more deeply than I can express, but not a thousandth part so deeply as I should. Having now dismissed all thoughts of foreign service, I hope to give myself wholly to the work that is before me. May God enable me to live more to him, lest, after having preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.

‘ No one could act a more friendly part than Mr. Simeon has done ; and now that it has pleased God to set at rest the painful question which has agitated your mind, I hope you will soon be restored to perfect health.’

Notwithstanding the door of missionary labour

was closed upon Mr. Thomason for the present, in which he acquiesced meckly, as being the will of God ; it is impossible not to contemplate him now under a new aspect—waiting like one of those angels, who, at God's ' bidding,' post over sea and land, listening to the first intimation from on high to go wherever he might be sent. If the chains of local attachment had bound him too strongly to Shelford, they were now snapped asunder ; if his affections had wound themselves too closely round any thing earthly, the roots were loosened, and he was ready to be removed and fixed wherever it might seem good to God. This spirit, so becoming one who in profession is separated to the Gospel, was not likely to suffer depression ; but, on the contrary, to become more exalted by a visit which soon after his offer to Mr. Grant he paid to an eminently Christian friend, with whom, in conjunction with Mr. Jerram, he had taken sweet counsel in the cheerful spring of life. Under his roof, he passed many days of the purest enjoyment ; nor was this lessened because it was of that class of pleasures which have a grave and sober tint, rather than those which display more gaudy and glowing hues. With some this category of the mind has no connection whatever with happiness ; they have yet to learn that the poet was not feigning when he wrote,

The broad unfeeling mirth that folly wears  
Less pleases far than virtue's very tears.

Of his friend and himself, he says 'We have had many a pleasant conversation on times past and have recollected our years at college with much interest. O that I could follow the example of Philip Henry, who writes thus in his diary when he records a visit to the University. 'I wept this day over my University sins.' Much cause have I to do so when I recollect the many privileges I have enjoyed, and the little improvement I have made of them. You will, I hope, think of me next Saturday, and pray that this returning anniversary may be a season of deep humiliation and sincere repentance. I would wish to begin a new life. Lord, pardon what is past, and strengthen me for what is to come.'

The description he gives of his friend's habitation, of his manner of life and ministry, particularly of one who was a close imitator of those women who laboured with St. Paul in the gospel, is such, that the enemies of the Church of England would howl for vexation of spirit, were there a counterpart to it in every parish in the kingdom.—'A sweeter spot I never saw. The vicarage is pleasantly situate, with a grass plot and shrubbery in front, and the beautiful spire of the church at the end. The house within is neatness and elegance; and what is better than all, Mr. and Mrs. C. are

wholly given up to the work of God, which prospers in an uncommon manner all around. Such a revival has not been known for a long while ; yesterday I preached to the dear people. There were at least 200 ;<sup>1</sup> it was a lovely sight, and God was with us of a truth. Many, many tears were shed, and we were all of us much refreshed. My text was John iii. 14—21. I have never seen a people of so much simplicity. In conversation they are unaffected ; there is nothing of party or system in any thing they say,—they utter the plain unsophisticated truths of practical religion. This is a most striking feature of their character ; at first it puzzles one, their expressions differ so much from those of more refined Christians ; but on closer acquaintance they evidently manifest the genuine temper and experience of Christians. We are exceedingly delighted with the place ; here we see a country parish as it ought to be : were all parishes thus attended to, what a happy nation would this be ! Mrs. C. is a singular woman : hearty, zealous, active, always ready to every good work. She enters with all her soul into the work. In the morning she shuts herself up in the church for an hour ; when she puts the candles into their place, sweeps the pavement, places the stools in order, and makes all ready for the evening service. The church under her

<sup>1</sup> It was on a week-day.

hand is such a picture of neatness as you scarcely ever saw. In the evening again, an hour before we begin, she goes to the church with a basket full of hymn-books on her arm, and takes her seat by the church door. There she directs the poor people to their places, gives out hymns, and spends the time in some pious exercise till the hour of service ; on entering the church all is order and silence, but you feel the pulse of the people the moment service begins,—it is like heaven below.’

After such an exhibition, how could Mr. Thomason fail to find the pulse of true piety beat more strongly and steadily within him ? such was the case also after an interview which he had during this excursion with an aged Moravian minister. ‘ In our way,’ he tells his mother, ‘ we passed within a mile of the small Moravian settlement in Yorkshire. My fellow travellers passed on, but I could not resist the temptation ; so I turned in by myself. Having heard much of Dr. Planta, a pious old minister, I inquired for him, and was received with much kindness and affection. He is a Swede, and practised medicine at court in his early years, but determining to devote himself to a better employment, he went to the West Indies ; there he continued above twenty years, preaching the gospel with great success, till the bad state of his health compelled him to return to England. He is now between



eighty and ninety years of age; his teeth are gone, his voice falters, his appetite fails, and he is evidently drawing near to the eternal state; but the vigour of his soul is unabated; it is impossible for me to describe adequately the fervour, the simplicity, and the love which he manifests in his whole deportment. He shewed me all round the settlement; informed me of their regulations, and gave me a long account of God's dealings with his soul from the beginning. It was very profitable, and I bless God for the visit that I had; his parting words were, 'It is not probable we shall see each other again in this world, but I trust we shall in a better, and I am *sure we shall if you continue with Christ.*' I partook of his spare dinner, and could not but admire the content and peace which reigned throughout the humble habitation. You will not blame me for turning aside. I have seen no sight so lovely, so encouraging, and so edifying in all my journey.'

Mr. Thomason's resolutions to tear himself from Shelford, with all its comforts and beauties, whenever it might seem to be the will of God; was again put to the test at the end of 1806. An opportunity of engaging in a very large and most laborious sphere at South Shields presented itself, upon which, without loss of time, but not without a serious struggle with himself, he deter-

mined to enter, should the choice of those who had the nomination fall upon him. Little less than the spirit of a missionary was requisite to make him renounce the retirement, the simplicity, and all the nameless delights and associations of Sheldford, for a place characterized by noise and dirt, and by the wretchedness and ignorance of a dense population. 'I have looked again over the barren hills, and smoke, and dirt, and feel that the consideration of 15,000 souls outweighs every thing.' These were the expressions of his self-devotion: knowing 'how arduous it was to become the minister in a town so populous and opulent, where the minds of men were either immersed in business, or degraded to the lowest state of vulgarity and profaneness;' he argued thus with himself,— 'there are many who are reconciled to live here all their days in the pursuit of wealth, and shall not the love of Christ and the honour of souls engage me in the same self-denial? When a door is opened for the extension of His kingdom, shall a minister of Christ say, I will not enter it, because the country is dreary, and the place is full of filth and wretchedness? God forbid! Here I am; if it please God to fix me here, I shall be contented to live and die amongst them. These things move me not; the only thing that moves me, is a fear lest I should not bring a right spirit to the great work.' This determination to devote him-

self to South Shields was not weakened by the ardent and Christian salutation of a ship-builder there, who, after his first sermon, thus accosted him, 'I have heard you, Sir, with very great satisfaction; you are the man, and *we must have you*; for if you are ours, I am convinced you will do your utmost endeavour to make us God's.' All appeared for awhile to be in accordance with these honest and hearty wishes; but an opponent of dissimilar sentiments and conduct ultimately triumphed. As soon as the decision was known, the unsuccessful candidate returned to the house of the warm-hearted shipwright, where after the silence of grief for some time, the master of the house and those around him burst into tears—'with a heavy heart,' said he, 'I bid them farewell: it has pleased God to disappoint them and me—His will be done.' Many, many, were the plans formed, and projects contemplated—he wrote to a friend not long after the occurrence, 'in a moment the illusion vanished; why should I feel a moment's hesitation in acquiescing? To my shame be it spoken, there was for a season something of rebellion within me. The tears of the people when we parted led me to cry out, Lord! why is it so? But it is now over, and I can with thankfulness and praise stay where God has placed me; with thankfulness do I say—rather let me say with wonder. Yes, it is all wonder

that I should be permitted to serve Him in any way, and more especially that I should desire to do it in the gospel of his Son.'

Had Mr. Thomason been stationed at South Shields, it would probably have been a final measure. India in that case would have lost the benefit of his invaluable labours. Scarcely also was there a moment when he could be less spared at Shelford and Cambridge, than at the beginning of 1807, for at this very period Mr. Simeon's chest became so affected by over-exertion, that to the deep sorrow of a most affectionate flock, he was compelled to desist from giving public instruction. That voice so long heard in Cambridge—to so many heard to their everlasting salvation—was now silent. Abstinence from ministerial duty being the indispensable remedy, Mr. Thomason received, not without much pain, nor without some trepidation, this communication, from Mr. Simeon:—'I wish you to prepare to stand up in Trinity Church on Sunday evening; in the morning I wish to preach, whatever may be the state of my body, because it may be that—but I forbear. This only I will say, that my soul is joyful in the prospect of suffering, as well as doing the will of God. I do find I am getting nearer to God, and I do believe I shall get great good to my soul from this interval of leisure. What if the Lord should be saying, "Set thine

house in order." I bless His name, that I am glad to receive that saying from him, and to address myself to that work. I feel truly thankful to God, that I shall have nothing to do on the fast day, but to spend it in humiliation and prayer.'

That the minister on whom Mr. Simeon's work now mainly devolved, found that difficulty in obtaining assistance, to which allusion has been made, is evident from this statement, with the comment. 'P— was to have preached for me at Trinity Church; he thought, however, that *in his circumstances it would not be prudent*; may I ever be delivered from *such* prudence!'

It was not till the spring of the next year that Mr. Thomason's long meditated design of consecrating his powers through life to the service of his God and Saviour in a distant land, was brought to maturity.

He thus imparted the state of things, and that of his own feelings, to his mother.

' March 4, 1808.

' My acceptance of the appointment has not yet come before the Court of Directors, yet I cannot help feeling that the event will assuredly be brought about. I own that the more I consider the various leadings of divine providence, and reflect on the unwearied tenor of my former wishes and plans, comparing them with what I now feel,

the more am I convinced that such a change of my situation will be accomplished. And I think, my dear mother, when you reflect on the course of my life from the beginning, on the singular manner in which I was led to devote myself to the ministerial work, on the course of providence by which the matter was brought about, and above all, on the earnest and repeated desire I have felt again and again for this particular destination, especially when you think that the work of my heart has been uniformly prevented by one great obstacle, and that this is now entirely removed, I think you will conclude that the time appears to be come. The same person who was once decidedly adverse, so as not to hear of it without tears, is now happy in the thought of it. She no longer thinks of the sea, nor of the climate, but counts it a privilege and an honour to be exposed in such a cause. For my own part, it appears to be of great consequence to the work of God, that help should be applied in that quarter where it is most wanted, and that where most lasting good can be done, ministers should labour. Now certainly God is doing a great work in India. The labourers are few, and the field amazingly extensive: they want men who will work, and whose habits are such as to render them useful workmen in a business where application and study are much wanted. In this

respect, my habits and inclinations are favourable. It will be a pleasure to me to acquire their languages, which are so much studied in Bengal, the acquisition of which is so important to usefulness, and my heart leans to that part of the world with the same desire it did just before I entered into orders. *I consider that what others expose themselves to for lucre and worldly honours, ministers ought to endure for nobler ends.*

‘All this I am sure meets with corresponding feelings, my dear mother, in your own mind. You have again and again given me up to God, and I have no doubt you will be supported on the present occasion. What an honour and happiness there is in making sacrifices for Christ’s sake. I am sure the more we are enabled to do this, the more solid peace shall we enjoy, and the more shall we know him to be a good master. I trust that you will be fitted for every trial, and strengthened to do and suffer the whole will of God.’

Filial affection of the intensity of Mr. Thomason’s subordinated, as we behold it in this letter, to the love of an unseen Saviour, and to a concern for the souls of his fellow-creatures, far off and unknown, is a spectacle for angels. In little more than a month after he had written it, he was studying Persian under a moonshee at Hertford; having received his appointment to the mission church at Calcutta, he was making use of every

effort to acquire a language so important in Hindostan, and panted to be at his post.

Thus to adopt his own reflections and words, ‘I have commenced the laborious and important work—laborious indeed it will be, but I set about it with unspeakable pleasure, and I trust that God will help me in it. The prospect of spending my strength and my life in the work of the ministry, where help is so much wanted, and the field of labour extensive, is indeed delightful.’



## CHAPTER VI.

It is well that junctures such as that in which Mr. Thomason was placed in the summer of 1808 are of rare occurrence. When the spot of fond recollections is to disappear for ever, when well known and beloved scenes are to be exchanged for new and untried ones, when our habits are to be broken up, when the face of social life is to undergo a total alteration, and friends and relatives are to be seen for the last time, the mind, musing upon many things, sustains a load which affects the mortal tabernacle, and this in return reacts upon the mind, and increases its pressure. The Christian indeed rolls his every burden upon Christ, and for the evil of each day finds His grace sufficient. But he did not divest himself of his sensibilities when he put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor does he desire to have them deadened, but directed when he approaches him in supplication : hence tears and farewells affect him deeply, when dangers and difficulties do not move him. The feeling that pervades the following letters is eminently Christian and most natural, but the

human nature of the Christian could not bear frequent repetitions of such excitement.

From St. Johns, in the Isle of Wight, Mr. Thomason thus addressed his brother-in-law, the Rev. J. Fawcett.

June 8, 1808.

‘Through the goodness of God we all arrived here last night in perfect safety. The ship lies at the distance of two miles, we wait only for a fair wind.

‘Yesterday all our affairs were completely arranged, and in the evening we united all together in prayer, commending each other to the grace of God. It was remarkable I yesterday entered my 35th year: The same day closed my labours in England, and a new career opens upon me with a new year. I am sure, my dear brother, you will pray that the Lord may give me a new spirit, and fit me for the arduous and important work that is before me.’

Then after naming many dear relatives as remembered by him, he adds—

‘They and their children, you and your children, and many more with many more children—how numerous the company of dear friends—how many we have to pray for! how many will pray for us! Blessed be God that we can pray for each other. I bear in mind the Sunday morning’s

engagements, and heartily join in your prayers—may they not only be remembered but performed with spirituality.

‘How much we should enjoy your company at this time! Never have I felt more the happiness of Christian society and Christian fellowship—thanks be to God for ever, that we can and do enjoy it.

‘You will be happy to hear that my mother was much supported at the trying hour. We retired together for prayer, and the Lord was with us of a truth, and when we rose from our knees, we joined in the parting embrace almost with smiles on our countenance. I verily believe that, for a moment, joy and thankfulness were the predominant feelings of our hearts. But it was afterwards very bitter. The next morning I felt a greater depression than I could have expected. But God is good: I have found him to be so. The parting has now taken place, and painful as it is we can rejoice.’

‘At some seasons,’ his mother wrote on the eve of his departure, ‘I am so oppressed I cannot command myself. I sorrow most of all that I shall see that dear face no more for ever, and only in proportion as I feel a sense of the divine presence, can my mind bear this deprivation. I see the suitableness of my dear son’s character for such a situation. I cannot doubt a moment that

whatever the Lord does must be right, and excellent, and sure, and good—but I exquisitely feel his loss; I wish and desire to call upon myself to look beyond this vale of tears to that celestial hill where God has prepared for himself a city—when once entered there all tears will be wiped away from our eyes for ever. They expect to sail to-morrow. God's will be done.'

From her son when the vessel was actually under weigh, and England was beginning 'to lessen in the lingering eye,' she received these parting lines—

*Travers under weigh, June 10, 1808.*

'MY DEAREST MOTHER,

'This morning we were summoned on board. The wind has become fair and we are proceeding out to sea. Our dear and honoured friend, Mr. Simeon, accompanied us to the vessel, and is now with us. We all retired to our cabin, and united in prayer, desiring to consecrate this spot to God, and to commit ourselves and all the ship's company to his gracious care. Blessed be God we know what it is to draw nigh to him, and we feel but one concern—that we may glorify Him in this world, and enjoy him in the next. O it is an unspeakable mercy to part with a good hope that we shall one day meet where sorrow and parting shall be no more.

‘I hope, my dearest mother, you still experience the gracious support of our heavenly Father. When I look back at this moment I can discern innumerable mercies vouchsafed to us both in times past. This is the greatest trial we ever had—who knows what joy we may hereafter find in this trial? Who knows what joy may be reaped by thousands? What abundant cause of thankfulness shall we have, if by temporal sacrifices many should become partakers of everlasting happiness. This indeed will be a rich reward.

‘I leave you, with many dear and tender friends; above all, with a gracious God who has guided, preserved, and blessed you, from the beginning even till now. To his gracious keeping I commit you, humbly hoping and believing that he will supply your every want out of the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus. May He be your portion, your shield, and your exceeding great reward! Amen. Amen.’

‘Adored be the name of God,’ were the heartfelt expressions of the friend who accompanied him to the ship, ‘for so uniting our hearts in love.’ For a long time I could not even look up—but at last I cast an eye of grief and affection towards your ship, and repeated it at intervals till you were about fifteen miles off; then finding you were almost out of sight, I went down into the cabin.

I arrived at home at twelve o'clock at night—thankful that I had been permitted to enjoy in our separation a pledge that we should meet again at the right hand of God. Our love will be there the same—it is the expression of it only, that will be different.

‘The wind has changed—were it to blow hard, you would be driven back again. Shall I appear unkind if I say I should be grieved to see you? Though I would not for a great deal have lost the opportunity of parting with you as I did, I would not willingly pass through it again; a few such scenes would speedily wear and enfeeble my frame. Yet for your sake, more than my own, I wish you not to be delayed in your voyage.

‘*June 12. Sunday.* I am just come from the table of my blessed Lord, where I have been commemorating his dying love with much comfort to my soul. The minister repeated the words to every individual, so that between receiving the sacred elements and returning to the public office, I had above half an hour to remember you and your children, the Captain and the passengers, the Captain’s widowed wife and your dear honoured mother, Mr. Martyn and many others.’

The Travers East Indiaman sailed on the 10th of June, 1808, and in fourteen days, the weather constantly fine, the sea smooth, the wind favourable. Mr. Thomason reached Madeira. And if

in this passage his sufferings were not of the same *keen* description as Henry Martyn's; let it be remembered, that though he left behind him a mother, for whom his affection was most ardent—he carried with him a beloved wife and children; nor let the effect of local association, a tender and deeply rooted attachment, and of sensibilities singularly acute in H. Martyn's case, be forgotten.

At Funchal, how could he witness the tawdry vanities and sickly superstitions of popery without many a sigh? Fain would he have escaped from what he beheld in the churches and in the streets, from the abuses of revelation, God's best gift to man, to contemplate the works of God, which are so stupendous in that island. Yet even amidst the grandeur and simplicity of rocks and precipices, he found the taint of that odious corruption which usurps the exclusive title of Christianity. 'In the bosom of the mountains, (it is his own description of a tour round the island,) and in the sides of the rocks, wherever the least soil could be discovered, the vines are planted. They seem to grow out of the rocks—the best grapes are the produce of these crags. The vine is encouraged at the expense of every thing else. We have not seen half a mile square of flat country. The ravine bursts upon the sight after a long and tedious climbing and fills the mind with admiration and awe. Imagine a vast hollow, whose depth alarms

the observer, whose sides are formed by immense rocks of most fantastic shapes. In the bottom is a chapel, and a priest lives in an adjoining house. Alas! the poor people; they are sunk in superstition which debases their minds, and bends them down in almost brutal ignorance.' The Roman Catholic Religion, to be known fully, must be seen where its tendencies are completely developed. In Protestant countries, that mother of abominations, that mistress of witchcraft, is on her good behaviour; but in other places she throws off the mask, and unblushingly proffers the cup of her incantations. There under the tonsure the sneer of incredulity is often detected; the very countenances of men who walk with their tapers and their relics in a vain show seem to say what one of their forefathers is reputed to have avowed—this fable of ours has turned to a good account. Where the Roman Catholic faith is daring and without disguise it is, that a just sense of our obligations to those great men our Reformers is to be acquired. Into what depths would not our own island have been sunk, but for the writings and translations of the Scriptures, the preaching, the prayers, the lives and deaths of those men of God.

Madeira about five years before Mr. Thomason visited it had been desolated by a terrific tempest and inundation. But where the light is darkness, judgments do but increase that darkness. The



films that cover the mental eye become thicker and more impenetrable. To appease the wrath of God the image of the Lady of the Mountain was solemnly removed to the cathedral. The bishop with all the ecclesiastics, the principal inhabitants, and the people, proceeded to a mountain to bring the Lady of the Mountain to the Funchal. Though the distance was two miles, when the bishop entered the church on the eminence, the people had hardly cleared the city. Drums were beat and guns fired, illuminations closed the day. When the English afterwards took the island, which being under the protection of the Lady of the Mountain, was deemed impregnable, it was attributed to her *having taken offence because her repose had been disturbed*. Enthusiasm possesses a resiliency equal to any pressure: the superincumbent weight of common sense, observation, and experience, fails to crush it, and serves only to increase its spring and reaction.

His curiosity satiated, his mind pained and disgusted, and with no appropriate task calling for delay, Mr. Thomason was not sorry when the sails were unfurled that were to waft him to the place of his destination. Yet as the chain of distance from England lengthened at every blast, his heart could not but suffer from some of those perturbations to which nature is alive, and which the grace of God alone can calm and sanctify. On opening a

picture of his beloved friend, Mr. Simeon, which he had not before seen, he was melted into tears again and again. 'We have looked and wept, wept and looked. These are not tears, he truly says, of worldly sorrow, but spiritual joy; we weep for more of his spirit, we thank God for the love and union that subsists between us, which we humbly hope will keep us one for ever and ever.'

In the early part of the month of November, after a voyage of above five months, and of singular serenity, 'a long interval crowded with mercies beyond all that can be expressed,' Mr. Thomason and those sailing with him began to look and long for the shores of Hindostan. But before their feet could press that land now not distant, and before their hands could grasp those of their Christian brethren awaiting their arrival, the Lord who doth whatsoever he pleases in heaven and earth, and who doth all things well, had in reserve for them a trial of portentous magnitude. On the coast of Pegu, early on the morning of the 7th of November, the *Travers* struck upon some hidden rocks, and soon after the crew had escaped from her, with the exception of sixteen poor creatures who could not be removed, was swallowed up in the waves. The horrors of that terrific event, the perils encountered between leaving the wreck and reaching the other ships, and all the varied emotions to which the scenes of danger and deliverance

gave birth, it would be injustice to the talent and tenderness, and above all to the faith, patience, and ardent thankfulness of Mr. Thomason, to recount in any but his own words : they are from a letter to his mother.

*Nov. 13, 1808, off the Sand Heads.*

“O be thankful unto the Lord, for he is gracious, and his mercy endureth for ever.” Let the redeemed of the Lord say so ; “ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.” You will read the narrative of the Lord’s mercies to us with tears of joy and thankfulness. Our voyage had been singularly propitious, from Madeira down the coast of South America, to the Cape of Good Hope, and from thence to the Bay of Bengal. We had fine weather all the way ; no gales to alarm, no calms to detain us. I was chiefly occupied in a diligent study of the Persian language, Mrs. T. in instructing the children · our days passed quickly and profitably. But whatever may have taken place during the voyage, the conclusion of it has been marked by so signal an interposition of divine providence, that we have neither time nor inclination to fix our mind on any other object. How will your heart be filled with thankfulness, and your lips shew forth his praise, when you hear that the unworthy writer of the following narrative, with his beloved wife and

children, have been almost miraculously saved from destruction.

‘ Whilst events are still fresh in my recollection, and in order that they may ever continue so, I will endeavour to relate that most wonderful deliverance from shipwreck, by which God has been pleased to preserve myself and family, with many other persons. Early in the morning of the 7th, we approached Cape Negrais. Soundings were made, which left us no room to apprehend any immediate danger. At half-past four they were twenty-one fathoms; which, being certified to the captain, he immediately came on deck, and gave orders for heaving the ship to. The words were scarcely pronounced, when the ship struck upon a rock. At this time the Earl Spencer was so near, the captain hailed and cried out, they were amongst breakers. The Earl Spencer providentially escaped, and actually passed over the reef without striking, but our own ship notwithstanding every exertion, continued to strike with violence. The first shock brought down the mizen top-mast; the wind then blowing fresh. In a moment a cry of distress was raised, which was heard by the Spencer, and which it very soon appeared was not made without reason. The passengers and all the ship’s company were soon upon deck, and saw with the deepest anguish the danger in which they were. I had previously gone down and informed Mrs. T.

that the ship had struck, and that none but God could save us. The heeling of the ship was now tremendous, and the blows continued, till the rudder was broken with an awful crash, that seemed to portend that the ship would immediately go to the bottom. Who but those who have actually borne a part in such scenes can conceive the dreadful sensations thus produced. We endeavoured to commit ourselves to the mercy of God, and then Mrs. Thomason snatching up our dear J. followed by Mrs. O——, with O——, repaired on deck. Here the confusion was extreme. Through the mercy of God, the wind soon moderated; a circumstance which gave time to take proper measures for saving the crew. The mainmast was first cut down, which fell over the side. After the foremast was cut away, and we were thus left a mere hull, which was momentarily coming to pieces; at this critical juncture, the cutter unfortunately went adrift; the jolly boat was dispatched after it, and in the mean time the crew were all employed in clearing and launching the long-boat. This was a long and difficult operation, but as all our lives depended on its success, the men exerted themselves to the utmost. Before they had fairly raised it from its place, the ship's back was broken, and at this moment I felt that nothing but a miracle could save us. I lifted up my heart to God, and exhorted Mrs. Thomason to do so too.

I committed myself and all my concerns to Him. Meanwhile, a squall of wind and rain caused the ship to beat violently; we all stood on the deck drenched to the skin, looking with anxious impatience to the launch of the long-boat. The ladies and children having been roused suddenly from their beds, were wet and half naked, and most pitiable objects. I ran down into my cabin to secure something from the wreck which I might preserve, if saved from destruction, as a memorial. In vain I sought in the confusion of the moment for my pocket-bible; at length, hastily snatching up my Hebrew psalter, with a volume of the Greek Testament, and my mother's last and valued present, the Golden Treasury, I put them into my bosom, and flew to my dear Mrs. Thomason and the children on the deck. In passing through the cabin to the ladder, it was painful to hear the rushing of the water in the hold, and to see the decks giving way, and the boxes floating about on all sides. Arrived on deck, I remained with my dear B——, and had the pleasure of seeing the long boat launched into the water. The captain then called for the ladies, who were one by one conveyed into the boat by a rope. The gentlemen followed, and the crew, to the number of ninety-one: more could not be admitted with safety. In the cutter were eighteen, in the jolly boat eleven. A sail was hastily thrown into the

boat, and we left the wreck with mingled sensations of joy, regret, and apprehension. New dangers indeed were now before us. Our consorts were out of sight, and though we could see the land from the ship, it was at great distance ; our boat was crowded, the sea high, the weather boisterous, and the shore when reached, barbarous and inhospitable. This was a trying situation. How little did we think a few hours before, that we should in such circumstances cast a longing lingering look on the Travers. The wreck afforded a distressing spectacle ; we turned our heads from the scene, and looked before us, and committed ourselves to the guidance of providence. Dangerous as our situation was, I found it extremely difficult to realize the nearness of death. I kept lifting up my heart to God, and relied on his gracious protection. We had brought a little sail from the wreck, which, with the help of our oar, kept our boat before the wind. It was about seven o'clock when we committed ourselves to the boat ; soon after, a heavy squall of rain came on, which rendered our situation still more gloomy and distressing. At the end of an hour and a half we saw the other two ships at a great distance, and they, after we perceived them, made sail from us. This was a distressing moment, as our last resource seemed to fail us. Meanwhile a tremendous squall involved us in darkness, and

drenched us with sheets of water. The boat shipped much water, and it was extremely difficult on account of her being so heavy loaded, to keep her before the wind ; at length, however, by the good providence of God, the weather cleared up, and we saw the other two ships heave to, in order to receive us. This was a cheering sight, and with inexpressible joy we looked toward them, and thanked God as we observed the lessening distance. However, a third heavy squall came on, and hid them from our view : through this we were preserved by the same gracious providence, and as we approached the E. Spencer, we saw the poop and decks covered with spectators, beholding our progress, and longing to receive us. Passing under the stern, I felt quite overpowered : it was indeed an affecting sight. Above a hundred fellow-creatures rescued from a watery grave, were joyfully received aboard, cheered by the loud and cordial congratulations of their deliverers. It was a feast to the benevolent captain of the E. Spencer and the crew, to be instrumental in the preservation of so many lives, and it was on our part a deliverance never to be forgotten. The continued emotions of joy, surprise, cordiality, gratitude, cannot be described ; the thing must be seen to be felt. It was half-past ten when we arrived at the ship, having been three hours and a half exposed in an open boat on a heavy sea, during which time



we had sailed about ten miles. Before we arrived, a gentleman on board the E. Spencer saw the Travers break in the middle, and the fore part go down. It afterwards blew very hard, and there can be no doubt but that before the afternoon, every vestige had disappeared. I have omitted to say that my dear E. awakened by the violence of the shock immediately fell on her knees, and prayed with much earnestness that God would pardon her soul. It was with difficulty she could be torn from the bed. On deck she renewed her cries, saying, "Let me die with papa. Lord, forgive my sins for Christ's sake." B's agitation at first was very great, afterwards it subsided. We stood all by one another, and solemnly gave ourselves up to God: and *neither then, nor now, nor at any preceding moment, did we feel the smallest regret at having left our native country.* I had almost forgotten to mention the attention of passengers towards us. One of them ran hastily down and recovered my watch, the alarum which you gave me several years ago, and which will be one hundred times more valuable than ever. That, with the trifling articles above-mentioned, are all the riches that remain to us. When we were obliged to leave several of our fellow-creatures on board, it was out of the question to encumber a boat already over-loaded. One of the servants seeing Mrs. Thomason standing in the heavy

rain, without shoes or stockings, approached her, saying ' You have no shoes ; take mine : ' I never can forget this. Another brought her a coat, a third a blanket for J. and a coat for E. But I cannot convey an adequate idea of the scene.'

To Mr. Simeon, from Calcutta, Mr. Thomason wrote on the all-absorbing subject of his most providential escape somewhat more fully, having then had more time to collect his thoughts,

' December 5, 1808.

' Here we are by the good Providence of our God at the wished-for haven. June 10th we left Portsmouth. Nov. 19 we arrived at Calcutta ; but we have arrived in a way we did not expect, not only *over* the waters, but *through* them. On the morning of Nov. 7—a morning much to be remembered by us—the Travers struck upon a rock, and in a short time was a complete wreck. The ships in company escaped in all haste from the scene of danger, and were soon out of sight. *We were left, not to the mercy of the winds and waves, but to the mercy of God*, who marvellously interposed, and brought us off in safety. As we entered the bay of Bengal, after a delightful voyage, in which we had not been seriously incommoded by winds or worn out with calms, the wind obliged us to go to the eastward and pass by two of the Nicobar Islands, and sail to Bengal by the inward

passage. In coming out of that passage, though the navigation is dangerous, off Cape Negrais, the southernmost point of Ava is Diamond Island, then in a southerly direction, Drowned Island, the Cocos Preparis, the Andamans. Between Diamond Island and Drowned Island is a reef of rocks, and by some mistake of the Captain's we got among them. At five o'clock, Monday morning, Nov. 7, the ship struck. I had just dressed myself, and was actually proceeding towards the deck, when just as I had fairly reached it a tremendous blow, which almost overset the ship, clearly shewed us the nature of our situation. In a moment all the ship's crew were assembled on deck. I went down in haste to B. and informed her of the disaster, and we hastened up together. She had nothing on her but a counterpane, and the dear children each a sheet. We clung together near the round house, and lifted up our hearts to God. It was an awful scene, every countenance was filled with terror and despair. Thus in one short moment they had exchanged their peaceful slumbers, for all the horrors of threatening destruction. The ship continued to strike violently; one mast was cut away after another. The guns were thrown overboard, and every hand was employed in clearing and launching the boat. This was our only resource, and now the long boat was let down into the sea, checked as it was

by spars, and unaided by tackle, though the loss of the masts is at this time a subject of surprise, even to naval men of experience. Through the good providence of God, this was at length effected, and when the ship was filled with water, and all the lower decks blown up; when the stern post was gone, and all the after-cabin dashed into one; when the back of the ship was broken, and she was fast sinking in the middle, we saw the long boat safely launched into the deep. The ladies were let down by haul lines, one by one, then the children, and the gentlemen passengers, until ninety-three persons had crowded into the long boat, and we seemed ready to sink. In the cutter were eighteen, in the jolly boat eleven, in all one hundred and twenty-two. Six Europeans were left, seven China men, and three Lascars.

‘ In the boat we had to encounter new perils; no ships were in sight, the land at a great distance, and we had neither oars nor sail to steady us; the sea seemed every instant ready to swallow us up. This interval of twenty minutes was very critical, for the wind was fresh, and the boat unmanageable, from the crowd of persons that overloaded it. At length the sail was hoisted, and after going before the wind near one hour and a half, we saw at a great distance the other two ships. After encountering three heavy squalls, and escaping many dangerous seas, we arrived, through

the mercy of God, safe on board the E. Spencer, Captain Heming, where we were received with transports of joy, and treated with most affectionate kindness. Major and Mrs. Welch gave Mrs. Thomason and myself half of their cabin. We reached our friends half naked, without one earthly comfort, stripped of our all except the rags on our back.

“ They who are wise will observe these things ” —not vaguely and generally, but with a watchful, humble, grateful particularity. In this spirit Mr. Thomason wrote to his mother, drawing up for her and for himself, an inventory of his mercies, and marking distinctly the links and component parts of this signal providence.

‘ In the late wonderful event there were many circumstances that marked the interposition of divine providence, and deserve particular notice.

‘ The ship did not strike in the dead of the night, when the difficulties opposing our escape, would, humanly speaking, have been insupportable.

‘ After she struck, the wind abated for nearly an hour, otherwise the ship could not have been kept together long enough to launch the boats.

‘ The masts fell to the leeward ; had they fallen to the windward, the ship would have swung off the rocks, and instantly sunk.

‘ When the wind blew fresh again the ship kept together till the boats were launched.

‘ The launching of the long boat was effected under all the circumstances of a heavy sea, a rolling ship, no masts to which to fasten the tackle—by mere dint of muscle, all uniting in the work, and wondering at the effects of their united labour.

‘ After being launched it was not swamped, dashed as it was amongst the masts and spars of the wreck.

‘ Crowded as we were, we were not upset between leaving the ship and hoisting the sail.

‘ We were preserved through a perilous navigation of four hours; and brought to the Earl Spencer not only without loss of life, but without injury to our persons.

‘ The Captain and officers conducted themselves with coolness, intrepidity, and good order.

‘ It becomes us to acknowledge God in these matters. O that the remembrance of his mercy, may be ever with us! Praise God with us, and pray with us that this may tend to the furtherance of the gospel.’

Mr. Simeon’s comment on his friend’s preservation, is too appropriate and characteristic to be omitted.

‘ How deep and mysterious are the ways of God!—that you should be made willing to transport yourself and family, and all you had to the shores of India, and then be landed on these

shores, glad to escape with your very lives! You view the calamity in its true light. I adore my God for giving you so just a view of it. God has said to you, as to the first-born of Egypt, I have spared your lives, and you shall be mine. I trust it is not the wish of either of you that a commutation of the Levites should ever take place. You are well contented and happy, that his service should be your *one* employment—himself your *only* portion. I was much comforted to find that in the midst of your danger and distress, not a thought of regret ever assailed your minds. *Here is the comfort of being in the Lord's way.* We are prepared for every event. I am persuaded that God has had designs of good towards the people of Calcutta. The exercises of love to which your necessities have called them will, I hope, be matured to a habit, and such an attachment be formed as shall endure to all eternity.'

## CHAPTER VII.

MR. THOMASON'S arrival at Calcutta gladdened the heart of numbers in that city—who received him as from the dead, especially that of Mr. Brown, who welcomed him, as he had done H. Martyn before, with all the cordiality of Christian love. His first interview with that eminent servant of the Redeemer, he thus touchingly narrates. ‘ We both sat down, but it was long before my tears suffered me to speak. They were tears, as I told him, not of sorrow, but of joy and thankfulness, wonder and praise. He told us to look around the walls—the furniture and the house were ours. It was a house built in faith and prayer as the residence of a missionary, out of the contributions of a number of poor persons who, many years past, had subscribed towards a fund for the support of the gospel, and united their prayers that God would send them a minister. Need I say that every chair and table spoke to us with a voice that thrilled through our hearts and overwhelmed us. Truly we could then praise God for our shipwreck. We could see a good



reason for the dispensation. It was plain that God had thrown us upon this praying people, that he had cast us from the rest of the world, and laid us under the obligations of Christian love, in order that we may be devoted to the sacred charge of feeding his sheep. He has placed us in circumstances where every thing is actually the fruit of faith and love, in order to teach us that we have but one thing to do. Mr. Brown introduced us into the church and vestry, where many had assembled the evening before, to thank God for our deliverance, and pray for a blessing on the minister preserved to them. Since we came here, we have had nothing to do of a worldly nature ; all care has been taken from us by our Christian friends. Think not of our hardships, losses, dangers, but of the honour He has put upon us in sending us to a praying people—sending us with loss of all, to persons who supply our wants with tears of thankfulness ; let not a thought of assisting us enter your minds—*know all of you, we stand in need of nothing but your prayers : these we implore.*

The second Sunday after landing at Calcutta, Mr. Thomason commenced his ministry at the old church from the text, “ Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men.” Mr. Brown also the same day preached a thanksgiving sermon for the greatest part of the crew of the Travers, few of whom, however, attended the sermon; and fewer

still the sacrament administered the succeeding Sunday by Mr. Thomason, with express reference to their signal deliverance. At the table of the Lord, *four only*, exclusively of Mr. Thomason's family, were present. Such ground is there so often for that sorrowful exclamation: "Were there not ten cleansed?—where are the nine?"

Whatever Mr. Thomason's temporal privations might have amounted to, we have seen enough to collect that he had not endured the greatest of all losses, that of the benefit mercifully intended by his sufferings. A perusal of the following letter written five months after his shipwreck, to Mr. Simeon, (to which extracts from his reply are appended) will confirm the conviction that he was a spiritual gainer, and that incalculably, by his sweeping disaster. Both letters expose the very inmost fibres of affectionate hearts; both exhibit the powerful influences of the grace of God.

MY BELOVED AND HONOURED FRIEND,

'What shall I say to you. The request with which your letter concludes is in unison with all the feelings of my heart. I may well have something appropriate to say to one who has loved so much, and to whom we are all bound by so many ties of obligation and love. We have received two letters from you, both of which have cheered us more than words can express. The tears of

affection you have shed for us, are not, I hope, totally lost upon us, though we are very, very unworthy of the love you bear towards us. Accept of our most affectionate acknowledgments for every expression of love, every friendly admonition, every tender petition for our welfare. It has often comforted and warmed our hearts when we reflect on the interest we bear in your prayers. One evidence I have, that my heart is not altogether insensible, is my daily grief and sorrow that the warm and lively feelings expressed in your letter, do not meet with a more corresponding glow in my own heart. O wretched heart! inexpressibly unworthy the least of God's mercies; I do chide myself, and take the shame of my coldness and ingratitude towards God, and towards you. I pray God to kindle the flame of love in me, that the fire may be burning brighter and brighter upon the altar every day. It is not animal affection I deplore the want of, but Christian affection—holy love, that love that gives earnestness to prayer, and which brings us into the happy enjoyment of Christian communion at a throne of grace, though separated 16,000 miles from each other. Here it is that the ardour of your affection meets with so wretched a return, and here it is that I find daily cause for humiliation and grief. I have taken your letters in my hand—walked after sunset on the roof of our church, and wept.

In feeble and sorrowful accents I have endeavoured to confess all my vileness before God. For ever blessed be his name, the vilest may find mercy ; and that one word expresses the one thing which I want. Sure none will have such great cause to bless God for his pardoning mercy and his saving grace as myself. With respect to the actual state of my own mind, I can only say, as I think I did in my last to you from Mr. Brown's house—that I hope I am beginning to understand the gracious dealings of God, and to feel the unspeakable importance of my situation as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I bless God the shipwreck has not been wholly forgotten, though I only feel beginning to improve it. If the Lord himself had not been on our side, even such a mercy would have been wholly forgotten. Experience shews us that except he give us grace to improve his dispensations, no judgments, no mercies, no warnings, will avail any thing. In our almost miraculous escape from the deep, God has given us a new and impressive call, for which we have reason to bless his name ; but more especially have we reason to bless him for not having suffered it to escape from our wretched hearts. It has in some measure led us to renewed earnestness and deep humiliation before God, and now at the end of five months I feel a growing sense of gratitude to the Lord for having brought us to India in the way he

has. Many of our friends at home have pitied us, but indeed it is a great matter of joy. I value it as a most precious jewel, and would not on any account recover from the deep what we have lost, even were it in my power. The Lord moves in a mysterious way, but all his doings are in faithfulness and mercy. We were coming to India flushed with hope, full of ardour and sanguine expectations, much animal fervour, and an amazing portion of self-sufficiency. He casts us upon a rock; it was a hard blow and it spoke loudly, 'Mind what you are about.' We were richly furnished with books and stores of various kinds; he takes them all from us; sends us here as cast-aways, completely stripped of every thing but *our trust in him and hope in his word*. Blessed be his name, I say again and again, that he gives us also a heart to think of these things, and to pray for a right improvement of them. The searchings of heart on this occasion have been very salutary though painful; and we can testify to the praise of his grace, that we are labouring with new earnestness, new zeal, new love, new thankfulness, to live wholly for God. And now, my dearly beloved friend, you having expressed a wish to hear something appropriate, what can I say to you? What can I communicate to you but the actual workings of my heart? You will reasonably expect that such an introduction to India ought to

be accompanied with important effects on my own mind, and ought to lead to a new and more devoted surrender of myself to the Lord. I beseech you when you write express freely your views upon this subject. Tell me what effects ought to follow from a dispensation of this nature. I charge you before God as you value the cause of your blessed Redeemer, and desire to promote it, to put me in mind of these things with authority. Ask whether I am living more nearly to God ; remind me of this very request I am now making, that I may be stirred up to diligent self-examination, lest I be put to shame before God and man. I pray God that his blessing may rest upon you, both in your public and private, and in all your social duties : to all the dear people at Shelford and Cambridge, present my Christian love. I look back upon my ministry amongst them with deep shame and grief of heart. I have injured them all, and I shall never be able to express this to them in person. I cannot but do it before God, and implore God for my innumerable neglects and want of spiritual zeal and faithfulness whilst amongst them. I never loved them so much<sup>\*</sup> as at this moment, and never so earnestly desired their spiritual welfare.

“ If it please God to spare my life, I hope to give some efficient aid in translations. At present of course I can do nothing, but others are doing wonders. Honoured and beloved Martyn, whose face

we are not likely to see for a long time, is doing as always, great things."

FROM MR. SIMEON TO MR. THOMASON.

"I cannot express what refreshment your long letter was to my soul. The length of time between one month after your arrival and the month of February was so great as to cause painful apprehensions. But your letter at last made amends for all. There was one part in particular that quite overcame me, and for a time deprived me of utterance. Your mention of our dear brother Martyn: a great length of time had intervened since any letter had arrived from him: the last gave a bad account of his health. His only surviving sister died about eight months ago, and I began to fear that he was dead also. The sight of his name and of his restoration to health was such a cause for gratitude, that I instantly fell on my knees to bless and adore my God.

"If my emotions have been less strong respecting you, they have not been less sincere or less affectionate. Indeed the two first times I read your letter, my sensations were quite strong enough for my weak frame to sustain. As it contained nothing which our dear friends and people ought not to hear, I permitted it to be read, being myself present to make observations; it is needless to mention what universal joy and gratitude it excited.

‘ But how shall I answer your letter where you bid me to charge you in the name of our Almighty Father, and to put questions to you in my own particular way. Alas! I want to be charged myself, and am but little qualified to charge others: and if questions when put to me I must answer them by hanging down my head and covering my face with shame. As to the question you ask respecting the improvement you should make of the deliverance vouchsafed you, I know of no words whereby to express it better than “*to be humbled in thankfulness before God.*” I can in some little measure tell you how it has been with me in some very recent deliverances on horseback. I had most confidently put myself in God’s hands, and he most graciously preserved me: in return for which I could not help saying in the words of David that all my bones should praise him. I could not help putting forth first one limb, then, another, stretching them forth to him, and receiving them afresh from him, and devoting them afresh to him. Thus then I think it may be with you; you may receive yourself afresh from him, and devote yourself in all your powers and faculties afresh to him. When you see dear Mrs. Thomason and your children, receive them from the Lord afresh, tell them they are his, and that you give them up to him. The state of mind which under your circumstances I should wish to



retain is that of humble grateful adoration. It was but Tuesday last I preached on the first petition of the Lord's prayer; and though commentators generally interpret it as merely supplicatory, I could not but consider it as Eucharistic. I have found at all times when my soul has been in a better frame, that admiring and adoring acknowledgments have preceded supplications, and that I dared not ask for more till I had rendered my acknowledgments for past favours. This I feel to be my state, when I awake, if I am at all in a proper frame, and the object, which whether in your situation or my own, I should wish to attain, would be to have my soul abidingly in this state."

Mr. Thomason's services in his church began at eight in the morning, and again at eight in the evening of the sabbath-day, an arrangement which diminished fatigue, and exempted him even in the hot season from overpowering exhaustion. On Thursday evenings he had a service; and on Saturday evenings he assembled the children in the church, accompanied by their parents and friends. Another evening of the week was allotted to visiting those who were decidedly religious: they met together at different houses for the purpose of hearing the Scripture expounded, and prayer. But the state of society was adverse, he wrote to Mr. Simcon, to the progress of the

gospel. In addition to the common difficulties arising from the character of the *heart*, there are obstacles here which are tremendous. The civil servants of the company hold the highest rank; you may call them the nobility—then come the merchants, the shop-keepers, the half-casts. These form so many circles of distinction, and so many sorts of pride, which have a sad effect in checking a free intercourse among the people. With certain unavoidable exceptions, these do not mix together, and will hardly be seen together. The religious people I have found in Calcutta, have retained these prejudices. The bringing them to worship God in the same room, has been a strange thing among them; our regular congregation at the Old Church is much smaller than you would expect,—not more than 250 on an average; on the week-day, 100; but you are to recollect, there are no servants in this number. The church would contain 450.'

'You have no idea in England, (he writes after a somewhat longer residence in India,) of the peculiar difficulties which oppose the progress of the gospel in this place. They are prodigious, and in the highest degree discouraging; arising partly from the nature of the climate, and partly from the nature of society, and chiefly from the close intercourse with the wretched natives, who are more degraded than you can imagine, and who

have the entire charge of children, and management of household matters. The natives swarm around us, and corrupt the minds of children from the earliest years. To an Englishman, the effect of their example, and the contagion of their language and practices, cannot be adequately represented. The natives become mothers of a progeny, notorious for bad morals and weak minds. Some favourable exceptions, but only a few, can be mentioned. Religion alone raises them—this gives a solidity of character—they become trusty and well-behaved. These form a great majority of our congregations. The number of rich people and company's servants who come to church is comparatively small. The better sort of people send their children home at five or six; until then, they are under the charge of native servants, and their minds are poisoned as far as they can be at that tender age. The parting from them is heart-breaking. They part with them very often never to see them more. This produces a sad derangement in society. There is no such thing as a domestic circle. The olive branches round the table, so delightful in England, are unknown. The children cannot even speak their mother tongue; they have to learn English on their way home. There is a dissolution of all the tender, amiable, cheering household virtues. These observations apply to the far greater number

amongst us. Some there are who diligently labour against these disadvantages. They live retired, and do all they can to counteract the influence of the native servants. If very conscientious, they may succeed; but the instances are very rare—the sacrifice of liberty and pleasure are so great. The business of a minister lies in encouraging those who are making some endeavours for the good of their families; in assisting and presiding over their efforts—but the progress must be slow. It is a fixed rule with us, that the children are always in the presence of *one* amongst us. We never suffer them, not for a moment, to have any intercourse with the servants alone.’

In less than half a year, Mr. Thomason’s congregation increased, and considerable interest in religion was excited, and instances of decided impression came to the knowledge of the minister; ‘not even in Cambridge,’ he testified, ‘have I witnessed such deep and solemn attention to the word of God.’

Having made considerable progress in Persian during the voyage, Mr. Thomason gave himself, in addition to his ministerial employments, to the study of Hindoostanee and Arabic. The plan of the day was this, “We rise very early, and return from our morning rides by six; at half-past six we have family prayer; at seven we breakfast. Between that and two, I am in my study; at two

we dine ; at three I am in my study again till five, then we have family prayer ; from six till nine or ten is occupied in riding and visiting friends ; in private parties and public duties. I have found it necessary to decline all invitations to dinner, without exception. This has enabled me to be regular, and very retired without giving offence.'

'I feel every day,' he concludes, 'increasingly thankful to God, for having opened a door in his providence to bring me to India. I thank God for having brought me to a place where labourers are so much wanted, and where there is so much to be done, especially that he gives me a heart for the work, and many encouraging tokens of his presence. Our week-day meetings in private houses would rejoice your heart. If we could transport you here for one month, how it would rejoice us ! But, alas ! we are parted never to meet again here. Yet, why do I say, alas ! when it is the will of God. I retract the word. Let me rather look forward in humble hope, that we shall meet together at the throne of God. I am ashamed to say, Pray for me ; because my conscience reproaches me with so much ingratitude and neglect towards you : yet I do say it again and again.'

In his ministry, Mr. Thomason had made one alteration—for reasons which he himself furnishes—he exchanged extemporaneous for written dis-

courses. After saying, Blessed be God, I hope the work prospers in *my own heart*; I love my *work* and my post; he thus explains his motives for this change. ‘You will think perhaps it is no proof of this, that I have left off extemporary preaching, and that it looks rather like a want of zeal. But first, I look with shame upon my extemporary preaching; many things were said without thought—without knowledge—without experience—without proof—without judgment. I earnestly wish to weigh, and examine, and pray over all that is delivered in public. I would feign set out anew in this high and holy calling. Secondly, the people here are prejudiced against extemporary preaching; they have been always used to written discourses, and it is desirable to remove every impediment, be it what it may. Thirdly, the exertion of extemporary preaching is vastly greater in this country than in England. But I am more and more convinced, that it matters little how we preach, so that we carry with us into the pulpit the presence of God, and preach and pray in the Holy Ghost.’

So favourably had Mr. Thomason’s labours been received, that before the lapse of six months it was expedient to enlarge his church; and though the days as they rolled on were scarcely dictinguishable from each other, in the prosecution of the work of each day, he had the most perfect enjoyment.

In either hemisphere it would have been difficult to have discovered a happier man; so much in error are they, who deem never-ceasing vanity, and stimulants of every description, necessary ingredients in their cup of joy. One comfort indeed was wanting; a minister of congenial sentiments stationed near<sup>1</sup> him, with whom he might have unreserved intercourse, and take that counsel which is truly sweet. He had not forgotten his intimate personal communications with Mr. Simeon, neither were the comforts of the clerical meetings in England obliterated from his recollection; he longed for something of this sort in India, and not the less so on learning, that his brethren, at their last meeting at Shelford, had in their prayers, commended him and his flock to the grace of God. "I need not say," wrote one then present, "how universally or how tenderly you were remembered by us; your absence caused a painful blank. Our separation was peculiarly solemn and affectionate; we took leave of each other, rather with our eyes than with our tongues, hoping, if spared to another year again to participate in this feast of love. I could not but contrast this meeting with that of another society; the composed, the meek, the tender serenity of the one, with the tumultuous bustle of the other."

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Brown was living at Aldeen, at some distance from Calcutta.

The fellow-labourers with whom Mr. Thomason was in unison, and for whose society he sighed, were those who could sympathise with the lowly and sublime sentiments developed in the following letter to Mr. Simeon.

‘ A letter from ——, received this day, containing an account of your last clerical meeting at Shelford, has filled our hearts with thankfulness, a glowing thankfulness and joyful recollection of past scenes: I may add also with joyful anticipations of that happy period, when the redeemed of the Lord shall be assembled, never more to be separated, never more to harassed by their spiritual enemies. We would always thus connect the future with the past: while we think of the mercies received, and the social harmony and christian love of that favoured place, we would look forward to that better place. Then we grieve no longer at the thought of never seeing you again in the flesh; we feel a glow of animation and gratitude in the hope of meeting beyond the grave. Let me thank you, and all the dear friends assembled on that occasion. The tender expression, and sympathizing tears, and earnest prayers, and devout thanksgivings, which then abounded for us, vile unworthy creatures, demand a humiliating soul, and devout acknowledgment both to God and to you. And they have it. “We feel abased



and we feel thankful. D— told us every thing minutely, and enabled us to meet with you, and to pray with you, and to converse with you all; but still more to weep for ourselves; for indeed we feel that your love is sadly thrown away.

‘ You know the nature of regular employment in the pulpit; the word of God does not appear to be *very rapidly* advancing, yet we hear of much that encourages us. The work of catechising seems to promise good. But we want the outpouring of the Spirit; and until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, no very great good can take place amongst us: we are praying for this; without this we may toil all night and catch nothing. O that the preacher may catch the sacred fire, and the people rejoice and be glad!

‘ I find our Thursday evenings profitable times. We are going through the gospel of St. John: the congregation does not much exceed one hundred and fifty people. But they come to hear plain truths, and we often find the Lord is with us indeed. We are in the sixth chapter—the bread of life. My subject this evening includes these two verses, “ He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” What can a poor empty creature say of the fulness there is in Jesus? what can I say of Jesus dwel-

ling in me, and my dwelling in Jesus? *O how we fritter away these passages, if we are not living nigh to God*, and enjoying the glorious knowledge of the gospel in daily dependence on the Redeemer. This I want very much, very lamentably, and my people will be meagerly fed. That word “dwelleth in me, and I in them,” fills my soul with wonder, and abases me to the dust. I would know it, and feel it, but know not how. I would speak of it, and recommend it, but have no heart for the marvellous theme. Will God in very deed dwell in this diseased polluted heart? Does He dwell there?—and can I, a vile and wretched sinner, be said to dwell in him? Though I scarcely dare say. Yes, yet I feign would come and cast myself upon the Saviour. It is my only refuge and hope, and if this reposing of the soul in Jesus, be indeed to eat his flesh, and drink his blood, I would now do it, yea, I must do it. Still I cannot lay hold of that word—“dwelleth in me, and I in him.” I feel very remote from this, it is too high, I cannot reach it. I feel like a blind man leading the blind. My comfort lies in the freeness and sovereignty of God’s grace; for while it gives strong meat to those who are full grown, it administers milk to the babe.

‘ My dear and honoured brother, you know not how very far I am from being a minister of the gospel. I am no gospel minister, for I knew it

not. I sit down and pen some miserable thoughts on Scripture, and occupy a certain portion of time in talking about the love of God, and the sufficiency of Jesus, and the work of the Spirit; but it is sad trifling with myself and my hearers. Surprising is that blindness which hides from me the glory of the gospel, and that unbelief which puts it away from my soul, and that dishonesty which starts from the presence of a holy God, and excludes me, if I may so say, from the holy of holies: but where am I wandering,—this is very unprofitable to you. O my brother, pardon me, and weep over me, and pray for me. One good end will be answered by this communication, you will know better how to pray for me. I want, for myself and people, more of the simplicity of the gospel. I want to come to Christ and bring them with me: I long for the time when the glory of the Redeemer, and fulness of this salvation shall so occupy my mind, that in studying and preaching I may have no other object in view, but speak always out of the abundance of the heart.

‘There are great snares attending our technical mode of sermon-making. Though I speak to a man famous for *Helps to Composition*, I speak the truth, and know the danger of this ‘art of preaching;’ we are apt to chalk out our work, and cut and prune, and then what a judicious, fine, persuasive discourse is this! And oftentimes our

love of Christ and of souls evaporates in our neat exordium and luminous distribution and close application to the sermon. I am ashamed, and tired, and sick, heart-sick of this. I have smarted for it, and do every day.

‘Martyn tells me he has begun to preach to the natives at his new station. The poor and maimed he refers to Sunday for relief. When collected, he knows not how to dismiss them without speaking a word about the bread of life. But he gives a poor account of them. The discouragements are greater than you can imagine. It seems as if the line of duty consisted in waiting and watching in a prepared state for opportunities that offer, than in going forth and talking to them as missionaries. When and how such opportunities may be expected, I know not. The Lord send them, and give us grace to improve them. If the tide flows, the ship will sail.’

It will readily be believed that the month of November, in the year 1809, did not return to Mr. Thomason without a special commemoration of mercies. In a letter dated ‘November 8, Banks of the Hooghly,’ expression was thus given to the emotions of his soul, animated by deep gratitude to God and love to man.

‘The time, and situation, and circumstances of the present moment are all so interesting, that

my full heart knows not how to commence the present communication. It is the day after the memorable 7th of November, which we have been spending together in retirement, six miles down the river, at the house of a friend. Yesterday we endeavoured to recall to our minds the event of that day, and were enabled, blessed be God, to humble ourselves before Him in some measure, and to encourage ourselves and our beloved children anew in his service. It was to us a solemn and profitable day. *The situation* is on the banks of that river to which we came through such a mysterious train of providences, and along which we proceeded naked and destitute to the place of our destination. *The circumstances* too, under which I write, are peculiar. At family prayer we had renewed our vows of yesterday, and had withdrawn into my study, and were conversing together in the most serious manner, when letters from Europe were put into our hands, containing all the affectionate congratulations, sympathies, prayers, and praises of our beloved friends. How affecting a close to the profitable scene! My mother's feelings were anticipated—so were yours: but your kind and tender expressions far exceed any thing we looked for, and fill us with an overwhelming sense of the undeserved goodness of God.'

Marked as this, and the next year was, by

losses of *Indiamen*, more than usually frequent and terrible, Mr. Thomason's thanksgivings to the God of his mercies, could not but be heightened by contrast. One very awful case spread gloom over the settlement; it was that of a vessel homeward bound in which was a chaplain returning to England with a large fortune. He had been unhappily led into an opposition to the early ministry of Mr. Martyn, and had preached against him and his irrefragable statements of divine truth. That the cross was his sole anchor at the last, is a hope to which charity would fondly cling.

By a capture of one of our traders, Mr. Thomason, as far as his comforts, and his sensibilities too were concerned, was a sufferer. Notwithstanding his positive injunctions to his friends to confine the expressions of their love to prayers, they had sent him out a variety of books, accompanied by other tokens of attachment. But the ship, singular to relate, was captured by the French, recaptured and finally taken again. On this disappointment he comments in this heavenly strain—'It seems as though God would complete the weaning he has begun; and we bless him for it. Every thing by which England could be remembered is swept away: but what is above all price, the bond of love is increased a thousand fold; we are more one with you in spirit; more closely united in Christ, more endeared by the common interest we

feel at the throne of grace, and the common prospect of glory.'

Those who know not with what ill-ominous forebodings, and with what a torpedo-touch, every attempt to lift up the torch of revelation in India had been invariably met, can but inadequately conceive the joy of those who loved the Bible, when, as was the case this year, 1810, the foundation of a Society was laid in Calcutta for the dispersion of the word of life through the length and breadth of that benighted land. On this occasion Mr. Thomason was not backward, either to rejoice, to contribute, or to act.

Some members of council, the Commander in Chief, and the Judges, as well as other influential persons, engaged to promote this holy cause. By ignorance, adopting the semblance and tone of oracular wisdom, all attempts of this nature had been denounced, as fraught with extreme peril to our Indian empire. But the darkness was beginning to pass away, and with it all the phantoms of the night. That noble institution, in its commencement and progress, has awakened a most salutary interest in many a bosom and as to native prejudices, they have slept on tranquilly, or if roused for a moment, it has been to relapse into slumber still more profound. So will it be with respect to the immolation of widows: so will it be also when the hand of power shall be

lifted up to crush the rites of Juggernaut, the toleration of which by a Christian government, is an abomination as palpable and odious as the very service of the idol by the heathen worshippers.

For the greater part of two years Mr. Thomason was almost as strong to labour in India as in England, but the second hot season made a sensible impression on his health. He thus describes the Indian year :—April : it is the middle of the hot season, we have fiery days and stormy nights. Thus it has pleased a gracious providence to temper the severities of the climate. If the hot days were to continue long we should sink at once. When the refreshing winds fail us, the sultriness is almost insupportable. Then comes a storm that cools the air. Then the heat returns. Then the lull. Then again the storm for several days successively. We rise to go forth and inhale the cool of the morning and rejoice. About June comes the rainy season for two months. This refreshes us. From the middle of August to the middle of October the clouds having poured forth their contents, the country is soaked. The winter having left us, the heat of the sun draws forth the moisture, and we live almost in a hot bath. All nature seems to droop—man, beast, and vegetable sympathize with each other. Were this season to be prolonged, few could endure it. About the middle



of October we have sharp mornings and bracing airs. Thus the years go round !'

During the period he speaks of as so trying, he began to droop so much, that he was compelled to suspend his ministerial duties for six weeks, and betake himself to a pinnacle on the river. Under this attack, or rather when recovering from it, on the still bosom of the river he communed closely with his own heart, and often did he lift an eye strong in faith and glistening in penitence, towards his Redeemer.

Dating his letter Chinsurah, October 1, 1810, he writes—' We are thirty miles up the river : this change has been rendered necessary by the state of my health, which began to suffer during the last rainy season. I have spent a month on the water. I went to the mouth of the river for sea air, and then proceeded up the river. Through the great mercy of God this has been very useful. God only knows what is to be the end of all our attacks, and what the term of our lives. To be in his hands who has the keys of death and hell is an unspeakable privilege. I feel it to be so, and rejoice. The climate has begun evidently to affect me, and it will be necessary for me to contract my exertions of body and mind. The constant employment of mind in this country is unfavourable to health and even dangerous. Before I was laid by, I began to visit the hospital once a week,

from which little labour some good has sprung up. But we are all in a low state, our proceedings are slow and infantine. The reflections which have passed in my mind during my excursion on the water have been rather of a discouraging nature. Yet though discouraging—the discovery of the truth painful as it is at the time, may be an unspeakable blessing. Who knows but that the discovery of my own barrenness and manifold neglects by the blessing of God may lead to more enlarged usefulness in his church. I have lately had much to think of, much to mourn over, much to pray for, and much, very much, to be thankful for. And now with renewed strength of body I would feign take up my charge again in a new spirit.

‘We are become weaned from all Europe expectations. The losses by capture and shipwreck of late have made the heart sick. You cannot conceive the general mourning that has been produced amongst us. It has been dangerous to mention the missing ships in company, lest the heart of some bereaved parent or husband should be made sad.

‘After being laid low from official engagements for six weeks, it was not without the greatest emotion I resumed my labours. It has pleased God to teach me something by shipwreck, but he has taught me more by bodily affliction. The

danger and alarm then was temporary, but illness gives many opportunities of serious reflection. I have had long seasons of pain and depression, which have I trust, through the mercy of God, been sanctified to my soul. I have seen much of the unbelief, pride, impatience, and dishonesty of my heart. Here I am beginning my work as it were again, and I pray God to enable me by his good spirit to press forward toward the mark of the prize of my high calling.

‘We have never yet seen Mr. Martyn, but hope to be gratified in the course of a few months. He has at length determined to try the sea air. He has been brought very low.’

The meeting which Mr. Thomason had so long and ardently desired, as Mr. Martyn’s health declined rapidly, took place sooner than was expected. At the time Mr. Thomason was seeking restoration of strength from the breezes on the Hooghly, Mr. Martyn was committing himself to the Ganges on his voyage to Calcutta. November the 3d Mrs. Thomason writes—‘Dear, dear Martyn arrived, and we had the unspeakable delight of seeing his face. The agitation I felt during the whole morning was such as I never experienced in India. Joy and sorrow alternately. Joy to see him, sorrow for the occasion. In three or four weeks he leaves us to go to sea for his health. He is much altered, is thin and sallow, but he has the

same loving heart. No tongue can tell what a refreshment the sight of him has been to us. I should be thankful to be his nurse if he would remain with us ; but one would wish him to try every means, hoping that God may yet spare him for a few years.—Martyn and I are both writing under the same roof.’ Her husband adds, addressing Mr. Simcon, ‘This bright and lovely jewel first gratified our eyes on Saturday last. He is on his way to Arabia in pursuit of health and knowledge. You know his genius, and what gigantic strides he takes in every thing. He has some great plan in his mind, of which I am no competent judge. But as far as I do understand, the object is far too grand for our short life, and much beyond his feeble and exhausted frame. Feeble indeed it is ! how fallen and changed ! his complaint lies in the lungs, and appears to be incipient consumption. But let us hope the sea air will revive him, and that change of place and pursuit may do him essential service, and continue his life many years. In all other respects he is exactly the same as he was : he shines in all the dignity of love, and seems to carry about him such a heavenly majesty as impresses the mind beyond all description. But if he talks much, though in a low voice, he sinks and you are reminded of his being dust and ashes.—It would have filled your eyes with tears to have seen dear —— when she

saw him ; you know her smile and hearty countenance, and eyes darting good-nature, but you never saw them so called forth. We were all filled with joy unspeakable, and blessed God for the rich opportunity of loving intercourse. I immediately put into his hand your long and affectionate letter, in order that *you* might be of the party. Martyn read it in the corner of the sofa, — sat by him, and I sat looking on : so the letter was read and the tears flowed.’

Mr. Martyn’s visit to Calcutta was as ointment and perfume that rejoice the heart, in the family of Mr. Thomason and of Mr. Brown. The Church of God in that city also, derived lasting benefit from his residence amongst them, transient as it was. His sermon on behalf of the Bible Society was of eminent service. His labours have revived all. Mr. Thomason says, ‘ Our assemblies at church are greater than was ever known : on Christmas-day there were above 1200. The hearts of many have been made glad ; he will embark in a few days.’ In a *few hours* after this was written, Mr. Martyn had sailed for Persia.—To spare the feelings of his brethren, as well as his own, he departed suddenly without bidding them farewell. As an angel of love and mercy he had appeared amongst them—as an angel he may be said to have vanished out of their sight.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE Calcutta Bible Society, which in the previous year had been framed and prepared, this year commenced its navigation of charity. Well might the friends of Christianity in the east call on all that is within them to bless God's holy name, when the first committee met; Mr. Harrington the chief judge of the native court, being president; Mr. Brown, secretary. The day of their assembling, the 1st of February 1811, was a day far more worthy of record than any of those which shine on political considerations in the annals of Indostan.

‘We begin to see already,’ Mr. Thomason writes the following month, ‘effects of the operations of the institution. An interest about the Bible is excited—Questions are asked—remarks are made—misrepresentations abound, and the thing is discussed—where all was a dead calm. Men are attacked—they repel the blow. This leads them to look into the Bible and its evidences. It is delightful to observe the reaction and its effects. Could you but spend one month and

examine the characters of our committee, you would adore the providence of God who fashioneth all their hearts. You cannot conceive how tremblingly alive we have been during the organization of this good work—there was so much to be apprehended from the fears, indifference, and prejudices of men. Great and marvellous are the works of God : let us rejoice and be glad. It is impossible to describe the joy I feel in contemplating the probable harvest of knowledge, piety, and happiness which will arise from this institution in this quarter of the globe. It gives greater stability to our proceedings than the most splendid conquests. Two other events of an exhilarating character occurred not long after, both connected, as was the establishment of this society, with the name and labours of H. Martyn. Abdool Messee, the keeper of the jewels of the king of Oude, having listened to Mr. Martyn's public Hindoostance preaching in the open air at Caumpore, had discovered the pearl of great price ; and his baptism took place at Calcutta on Whitsunday. ' Last Sunday was a happy day,' Mr. Thomason wrote with gladness of heart, ' and Mr. Brown, baptised in my church an adult Mussulman. The man had long given satisfactory evidence of his conversion. His heart was first touched under the ministry of dear Martyn. Hearing that a sermon was preached in the Hindoostance lan-

guage, Sheikt Saleh, (that was his name) thought he would attend. He went and was caught in the net. The preacher began with reproof, and ended with the consolation of the gospel. The holy strain of the former part of the discourse filled him with a solemn awe, and the gracious promises of the latter, with a longing desire to become acquainted with Christ. He went away serious. In reading over and writing out the Persian translations of the gospels, his understanding became more fully informed, and his heart more touched with the truths of God. He chose them, renouncing all his former errors, and determined at all events to be a servant of Jesus. Without any solicitation from others, he soon discovered that it was necessary he should be baptised, and accordingly made application to Martyn. *After proper instruction and a full trial*, at the end of fifteen months from his first hearing Martyn, he was baptised. We gave notice to those who were likely to be interested in the matter, and a goodly number were assembled. We shall not soon forget the day. We are full of joy and hope. The work has been entirely of God. Our new brother, now called Abdool Messce, the servant of Christ, is humble and grave, and quiet in his behaviour, and there seems every reason to hope he will adorn his profession. May such scenes become frequent amongst us !'



The other cheering occurrence was this :—Mr. Martyn's Hindoostanee New Testament was committed to the press. Concerning this great work Mr. Thomason thus speaks :

‘ The slip of paper inserted in one of your letters concerning an observation of Dr. —, on Martyn's nicety of style, surprised me much. It is not like the judgment of a scholar and critic. Would not the Professor be ashamed of a false concord or bad idiom in addressing the university ? How can we be too attentive to these proprieties ? How can we hope that any translation of the Scripture shall survive the lapse of ages, unless the style be carefully attended to ? Bad style is like bad poetry, soon forgotten or despised. Accuracy and elegance combine to form a standard which is itself a great means of preserving languages from decay. Martyn is justified by experience. He has in his Hundoostanee translation of the New Testament finished a work which will last, for it is a model of elegant writing as well as of faithful translation ; it is so faithful as to represent with scrupulous accuracy the whole meaning ; yet not so elegant, but that any one acquainted with the language, can read it with ease. That honoured and beloved labourer is now at Shiraz, busied about a Persian translation of the New Testament. What may we not expect from him if God should be pleased to spare his life a few years ! ’

To crown this felicity, Mr. Thomason had the inexpressible joy of seeing his ministry prosper. The vineyard from the first had given a pleasant smell, and the fig-tree had put forth its buds; fruit also was visible—now to the vivid satisfaction of the patient labourer it was more abundant. ‘It would fill your heart,’ he tells Mr. Simeon, ‘with joy to see us here. Whatever reason we have had formerly to see the hand of God in our coming to India, has been greatly increased of late. New scenes of usefulness open; my hands are now quite full, and through mercy, I see the gradual operation of a gospel ministry. Some persons of late have been brought to a serious concern for their souls. Those who were once scoffers, hear and weep, and endeavour to promote the cause they formerly despised; and our own people, which is a great mercy, and received as an answer to prayer, are more united amongst each other.’—All this was the more encouraging, because no one could have a more lively sense than Mr. Thomason, of the weight of his office, of the arduousness of its execution, and of the obstacles that beset a minister in India. On these subjects he again disclosed his sentiments to Mr. Simeon: ‘I feel the necessity of a close and diligent reading of the Scriptures. It is impossible to occupy the teacher’s chair with advantage to our hearers, except we are very much engaged in experimental

reading of the Scriptures ourselves. O what treasures are to be found in the word of God. Blessed be God for a little sense of them!—would that I could give my whole heart and soul to them. But I am as yet only on the surface of things; this at the age of thirty-seven. God knoweth I deplore my ignorance, and count myself to be a mere novice, and feel unspeakably unworthy to preach Christ to lost sinners. I want to have my heart warmed with his love. But oh, my exceeding vileness and hardness of heart! Were I not assured of your tender affection, I could not write thus: at such a distance we ought to communicate with each other in strains of grateful praise and love. To which, with all my unprofitableness, I am led, when I think of the amazing riches of his grace.

‘ Now, my beloved brother, go on to write to me. I never needed so much the kind communications of a Christian friend and brother.—The state of society here, and the state of the climate, oppose difficulties which you can hardly appreciate if described. The climate has influence upon one’s natural sloth in a thousand ways; and society is so constituted, that we are opposed at every step by the pride of rank and office, and colour, to a degree surpassing all conception. Had I chosen to live here in the state and dignity of chaplain, my path would have been easy, but

in the attempt at a parochial line of labour, the difficulties are prodigious. I find my heart sick sometimes, and learn the drift of that verse in Ecclesiastes, "that which is crooked cannot be made straight." In England, different classes coalesce easily: here, even after religion has its decided hold on a man, he remembers his little insulated sphere, and finds it hard to be cordial with those who are above him, or with those who are beneath him: not with those above him, the pride of the great produces a reaction in the lower order; not with those below him, for obvious reasons. To relieve myself from such painful inconsistencies, I find the best practical remedy is to be much in company with the most wretched, the diseased, the poor, the sick and dying. These are thankful to hear the words of life. I have much comfort at times with the poor invalid soldiers in the hospital. About fifty attend, and I visit them twice, on Tuesday and Friday evenings. With respect to the sick—the miserable sick people in this truly miserable place—I mourn over myself and them; I go rather with the hope of good to myself than to them. So rich is the mercy of God, and so precious the service of our master, some of the happiest moments I enjoy are in going to, or returning from, these unhappy creatures.'

The years 1812 and 1813 were to Mr. Thoma-

son years of mourning beyond experience or expression. Sorrow upon sorrow rolled in on him—his only consolation was to look upwards through the window in the ark, which did not allow his eye to rest upon the swelling waves. The year 1812 was ushered in by an earthquake, of which he says, ‘It was preceded by a loud noise, the house shook; the oil in the lamps on the walls was thrown out; the birds made a frightful noise; the natives ran from their houses, calling on the names of their gods; the sensation is most awful; we read the forty-sixth psalm. This fearful prodigy was succeeded by that desolating disaster, the Serampore fire. I could scarcely believe the report; it was like a blow on the head which stupifies. I flew to Serampore to witness the desolation. The scene, was indeed affecting. The immense printing office, two hundred feet long, and fifty broad, reduced to a mere shell. The yard covered with burnt quires of paper, the loss in which article was immense. Carey walked with me over the smoking ruins. The tears stood in his eyes. ‘In one short evening,’ said he, ‘the labours of years are consumed. How unsearchable are the ways of God! I had lately brought some things to the utmost perfection, of which they seemed capable, and contemplated the missionary establishment with, perhaps, too much self-congratulation. The

*Lord has laid me low, that I may look more simply to him.* 'Who could stand in such a place,' he asks, 'at such a time, with such a man, without feelings of sharp regret, and solemn exercise of mind. I saw the ground strewn with half-consumed paper, on which in the course of a very few months, the words of life would have been printed. The metal under our feet amidst the ruins was melted into mis-shapen lumps—the sad remains of beautiful types consecrated to the service of the sanctuary. All was smiling and promising a few hours before—now all is vanished into smoke, and converted into rubbish!'—adding with self-application,—'Return now to thy books, regard God in all thou doest. Learn Arabic with humility. Let God be exalted in all thy plans, and purposes, and labours; he can do without thee.'

Another severe affliction was the rapidly declining health, and subsequent death of that eminent servant of the Lord, Mr. Brown, who for the space of seven and twenty years had preached the pure, unadulterated gospel of his Redeemer, and had been an ornament, intellectually and spiritually to the Church of England. He was the father of the Bible Society in India, and to him it was owing, that H. Martyn, who venerated and loved him, brought the Hindoostanee version to a successful termination. He began to sicken in the spring, and before the hot

season had expended its strength and fury, he was where the sun could not light on him, nor any heat, and was led by the Lamb to the living fountains of waters. To Mr. Thomason was assigned the task of preaching his funeral sermon. Concerning Mr. Brown's disinterestedness, Mr. Thomason, who from happy consciousness could well estimate this attractive quality, taking his text from John iv. 35—38. observes, he possessed a soul superior to sordid views—in proof of this we appeal to his labour in this church. It was well known he undertook its duties without any prospect of pecuniary emolument, and *continued to preach Christ here during the long period of twenty-four years, under great discouragements, without the smallest remuneration for his labours*, except what arose from his love to the work, and the hope of gathering fruit unto eternal life. So far from being enriched by the church, he was ever forward in contributing to its support. His memory is blessed. He now receiveth his wages.

Those who are acquainted with Mr. Brown's labours, have seen an example of patient continuance in well doing. He maintained his post here, under circumstances that would have dismayed others who possessed not the same humble dependence upon God. The attendance at first consisted of no more than two or three families ;

still this faithful servant kept his course, and he lived to see much encouraging fruit of his labours.

About two months before his decease, he wrote in pencil some recollections, which contain an account of the consolations he enjoyed in his low estate.—‘March 22. Prostration of strength to the utmost degree, without the least check to the disease. I feel myself to be sinking fast. I said my times are in thy hand. I ascended into the chamber of the divine attributes, and had a pleasing assurance that Jehovah is good : that great is the Lord, and of great power, and that his understanding is infinite, and I rejoiced in his sovereignty. He made me sensible that for aught I know, that very day was the best for my dissolution. I was persuaded that if it were his will, that very day were best in all respects, how much soever appearances might be contrary : that it would be best for my soul, whose dealings I could commit to Christ, and even best for my family, dark and very stormy as the dispensation must appear within, and awfully afflictive. Thus my view of God in Christ, delivered me from depression of mind ; from all fear that hath torment, and from apprehension of evil of every kind, both with respect to mind, body, and estate. I could trust all confidently with God. Nor was the adversary permitted to assault me for a moment. Isa. lix. 9. assures me of mercy infinite : “ as the heavens are



higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

My crimes are great, but not surpass,  
The power and glory of thy grace.  
Great God, thy nature hath no bound,  
So let thy pardoning love be found.

"The glory of Christ and his kingdom occupied my thoughts: my heart prayed, thy kingdom come. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive all glory, and honour, and power. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, with power and great glory; come to be glorified in thy saints, and to be admired in all those that believe. Thus have I been supported and cheered during the whole period of my failing strength. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever.

"My excessive weakness and subsequent trials commenced on Palm Sunday, and continued all the week. The Saviour's progress through the week of his passion, was the comforting subject of my meditations. I thought over all the circumstances of the gospel history with thankfulness. Every fact, and every word, the work of every day, were precious to me, and I kept my thoughts to the business of each day, particularly to the transactions of Thursday and Friday—the supper—the agony—the cross. Precious are the thoughts of these things. The Lord Jesus the Son of God, died for sinners, that he might take away the sting

of death, and procure for us the hope of a joyful resurrection. Easter day—my strength scarcely returned; my heart rejoiced in him who is the resurrection and the life. My only prayer was, that I might see his glory, and speak of him, and that he would glorify himself in me, in my soul and body, living and dying. March 30. Easter Monday—I was asked if I could hear good news, and was told of the formation of a Bible Society in Ceylon. I could not refrain from tears of joy. I called for the Hebrew psalter, and heard the 103d Psalm deliberately read over. Then I turned back to the 20th verse. “Bless the Lord, O ye angels of his that excel in strength.” This I repeated the whole day, calling on the angels who excel in strength, for as yet I had little or none to praise Jehovah.

‘The Hebrew Psalter has been very precious to me. The 130th was deeply interesting, above all the penitential psalms. I paused at the 8th verse of the 143rd Psalm. I found there what I wanted; there I fixed and fastened, and greatly blessed and answered were the words which the Lord the spirit enabled me to reiterate in the ears of my Advocate with the Father. Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul to thee. My prayer through the whole of my sickness has been, that if my life be spared a little longer, it might be

wholly consecrated and devoted to the glory of God; but I know not the way, and could promise nothing of myself, but only in the strength and grace of Christ. I discovered the way in which, if God enable me to walk, then will my prayer be answered. Ps. xxxvii. 31. "The law of his God is in his heart, none of his steps shall slide." This I perceive to be the only infallible rule for safe and sure walking. The law of holiness in the heart; the law written in the heart by the Spirit of the Lord. All must be a heavenly gift, coming down from the Father of mercies. I have said nothing about the comfort some profess to derive from the reflection of their having done well. God has not put it into my mouth to say, Here am I, a profitable servant, worthy of the kingdom of heaven; but to cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." When, Lord, have we come up to our duties; loved thee as thou requirest; served thee as we ought, or done any thing worthy of thy notice or reward?

In an address to one of his people, twelve years ago is the following record—"Upon a careful review of the doctrines I have taught from the pulpit, I find them to agree with Scripture and experience, and I have no doubt of their truth. They are as the sun before me, and it is all my desire to live and die with them. Though I speak of doctrines, there is but one doctrine, out

of which all the rest arise. I know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified. He is the foundation, the corner stone, the way, the truth, the life, the hope, the refuge, the bread of life, the consolation of Israel. O sweet name of Jesus ! says St. Bernard, it is honey in the mouth, melody in the ears, and healing to the heart. This doctrine can only be learnt by experience, and all our experience can only teach us this doctrine ; all within us and without us is folly, and vanity, and death. Sin has poisoned every enjoyment.. By reason of the curse, the whole world has become a desert and void, in which the soul is prone to seek rest, and can find none. Sin has defiled the image of God, and opened the door of the temple to every abomination. What can support us under these views, but Jesus Christ crucified ? Here is wrath turned to grace. The world wears a new face ; all things which were against us, become for us, working together for our good. The ills and the comforts of life, all turn to lasting advantage. A weight of glory is the fruit of every affliction, all is ours if we are Christ's.'

Mr. Brown had not long entered into his rest, when another affliction which had been suspended unseen, like tempestuous clouds at midnight, throughout the close of the year 1812, burst, in the early part of the succeeding year, upon the Indian

church. At Tocat, October 16, 1812, Henry Martyn expired, amidst strangers to his faith and to his name. The tidings of this event so unexpected, so irreparable, so affecting in itself, in its circumstances, and its consequences, saddened the spirits of numbers in Calcutta, amongst whom Mr. Thomason might be described as the chief and most heart-stricken mourner. A greater grief on personal and general considerations he could not have endured. He knew well that when Henry Martyn sunk into his grave, a great man had fallen in Israel. He felt keenly that the head of an endeared friend and brother was then low in the dust. Few, 'he justly and emphatically exclaimed,' have reason to mourn individually as I have : with him I hoped to spend my days in mutual deliberation and united labour. Here in a short time he would have been fixed, and hence we neither of us would have wished to stir a foot. He has often said it to me. I fondly counted on his return full fraught with health and Arabic. On this his heart was set, though not for itself. It has pleased God to remove him to the rest for which he had been panting, and from which nothing but the love of his work here would willingly have detained him. With his presence in Calcutta, the Persian and Arabic versions would have proceeded with spirit ; he was so eminently qualified with all needful endowments for a good translator. The great

Head of the church lives, that is our consolation. I have learnt more than ever what that Scripture means, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils."'

'We are deeply wounded,' are his words in another letter; 'His walk was so grand, his labours so important, his attainments so rare! O how fondly we counted upon his future labours! how the heart leaped for joy at the thought of Martyn's successful career in Persia, and hoped-for return to Calcutta. Here he hoped to return and spend his days, having often said to us there was no spot in the world so dear to him as Calcutta; we responded with affection to his notes of love, and panted with eager desire to see him. Often have our petitions been offered up at our social meetings for his preservation and success. Once especially the conversation at table was wholly engrossed with Martyn, and the prayers which followed were unusually fervent. The very next day we heard of the termination of his career.

'You can judge (it was a letter to Mr. Simeon) of the extent of my disappointment and depth of my sorrow. Here I had hoped to spend the remainder of my days with that honoured minister, participating his labours, administering to his comforts, and roused by his example. But it has pleased the great Head of the church to take him to himself—it hath pleased Him, and dare we

repine? No event within my recollection has filled me with so much sorrow, and caused so hard a conflict between faith and unbelief, from which I have learnt much of the idolatry of the heart, and of its rebellious opposition to the will of God. We idolized this rare creature: so the Lord has removed him, and taught us more simple dependance upon himself. The experience has been bitter, the ultimate fruit I hope will be sweet. Our great Head remains, and He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. If He is satisfied we may well be so; who knows how He may bless us in our bereaved state?

‘Where are all those zealous young men who assembled in your Town Hall and helped forward your Biblical Associations? O that they would take the map of India in their hands., O that the Lord would dispose their hearts to look upon this immense country with Christian tenderness and compassion.—The labourers must be disposed to cheerfulness—a melancholy turn of mind is highly unfavourable in India. The climate itself depresses more than you can conceive. In all your estimates of characters let cheerfulness be considered an essential requisite.

‘The Government have of late been remarkably strict in looking after missionaries. The result of a long correspondence has been, the dismissing of some from the country: and this in the age of tol-

rance ! At an enormous expence these good people are going home, whose resources are all drawn from the pockets of the poor.'

Mr. Thomason's veneration as well as affection for Mr. Martyn was exalted, and was equalled only by the low opinion his humility led him to entertain of himself. On hearing shortly before his friend's decease that their two names had been joined at a public meeting in England, he thus expressed himself. 'A few days ago I was favoured with the sight of a London paper, which gave an account of the 8th anniversary of the Bible Society. It was impossible to express what I felt on this occasion. Joy, thankfulness, wonder, praise—the heart labours—all words are weak to convey the effects of these good tidings in this distant land. One thing only I do truly lament, that my name should have been coupled with Martyn's in Mr. Simeon's speech. It was a very unbecoming union of names. Pray let all who love me be silent. My desire is that they would not mention my name. Why may I not be gratified? I have no right to be mentioned with that honoured servant of God. I am ashamed to think of it, and scarcely know how to lift up my head. God be merciful to me, and give me a heart for His work. O that my soul could rise up to meet the occasion, and that there were some little correspondence between my diligence and the need there is for diligence.'



From the period of Mr. Brown's lamented departure in 1812, till the close of the succeeding year, when Mr. Thomason obtained, after countless difficulties, an assistant in his church, his labours were unusually great. Pastoral concerns, his prime and most pleasant employment, were prosecuted assiduously; from these, nothing was suffered to divert him, but unhappily there was no one to share the burden. Besides these duties he was engaged in revising the Arabic version of the scriptures, with Sabat, and in conducting through the press H. Martyn's Hindoostanee New Testament. He executed also, at the desire of the government, the office of Examiner in Arabic, in the college at Fort William; and as if this were not enough, he was preparing further work for himself by inviting the Church Missionary Society to place two missionaries in his house, whom he undertook to instruct gratuitously in oriental literature. But the project, that, of all others, lay nearest his heart, was the establishment of native schools; and, as a preparatory step, a school for schoolmasters. Earnestly intent as he was upon the advancement of the religion of Jesus Christ in India, it will readily be supposed that amongst those who were wounded at the measure dealt out to those eminent servants of Christ, the American missionaries, Messrs. Judson and Newell, by our East Indian government at the end of 1812, no one

was more deeply affected than Mr. Thomason. Calm, and placid, and almost imperturbable in his temper—to see those men of God peremptorily dismissed from a land of idolatry, blindness, and pollution, was to him a trial of patience inexpressibly severe. They had turned their backs upon their native country, they had passed through many a peril, and endured many a pang, to impart the gospel to our benighted fellow-subjects; but after a short residence in India, and after a conduct against which nothing could be excepted, they were summarily ordered to depart. Whilst the priests of the foul and debasing rites of Juggernaut were countenanced, the revenue being increased by their abominations, these self-denying, devoted servants of the Redeemer, were driven from those shores to which love alone, of the most exalted order and of the purest description, had brought them. Not long, however, after the shameful dismissal of these Christian ministers, the friends of true religion in England, to the unspeakable joy of Mr. Thomason, and of all others of the same spirit in the east, rose up as one man to claim permission of the government to make known the Saviour's name in those dark and neglected territories. On the renewal of the East India Company's charter, the tables of the two Houses of Parliament were loaded with petitions to that effect.

Testimonies also were given at the bar of the House of Commons most favourable to the petitioners. On the opposite side, ideal phantasms, magic figures, were exhibited to alarm and deter; but these disappeared gradually as the light was let in on that darkened part of the stage. Lord Teignmouth, formerly governor-general of India, stood forth, an able and most powerful witness for India, shewing on the one hand England's incontestable obligations, and on the other, the security in which they might be fulfilled. The Marquis of Wellesley also in the House of Lords, advocated all prudent attempts to promote Christianity in the east. His speech was calculated to convince all who were not steeled against conviction. 'With regard to missionaries, he never knew of any danger arising from them; he never heard of any convulsions or alarms produced by them. Some of them were learned men, and were employed in the college of Bengal. He had always considered them as a quiet, discreet, and learned body; and he had employed them in the education of youth, and translations; more particularly in translating the scriptures into the eastern languages.'

Of the plan of native schoolmasters, Mr. Thomson says with warmth and energy, but with the coolness of considerate wisdom, 'This school would be a noble establishment. I despair of

seeing any great good done in a place where the objects of ignorance and vice are innumerable, until some such institution has been formed. But I fear it would not suit the adventurous and grand and dashing spirit of the age. The good people of England would suppose that a free school containing 1000 children, must be tenfold more productive than one containing 24 children, not considering the great importance of having one schoolmaster, they would suppose the money almost wasted. Schoolmasters must be made *here*, not in England. Those in England expect more pay, and can bear less fatigue, and must be formed here after their arrival. Much is to be learned before they can labour here efficiently. The thing to be most earnestly prayed for is, that government would support this establishment. It would be a noble item of expenditure. The benefit would be distant, at present scarcely perceptible, but future generations would arise and call us blessed. This plan has been long in my mind. It is far from being new, but in this place the application of it to practice is very difficult, arising partly from localities which it is not easy to explain to an European, and partly from the indolent spirit of the place, and partly from the great paucity of efficient labourers. The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice; sure we are, that good ~~that~~ is done upon earth, he

doeth it, and when he acts, none can stay his hand.'

Mr. Thomason's feelings, which had been so much hurt on account of the usage of the American missionaries, were soothed by a vote of the government in the year 1813, of a kind quite new in India, and supplying an auspicious omen of a policy congenial with the character of a nation professedly Christian. Thirteen of the most respectable people in Calcutta, signed a public address to government, petitioning for the Bible in behalf of the Malays. 'Thanks be to God,' he exclaimed, 'for this great thing, great and novel in India: whatever you may all feel about this matter, who are surrounded on all sides with vigorous societies, and zealous combinations of Christians. The government in reply, acknowledged that the thing was laudable and important, and promised 10,000 Rupees, about £1250, in aid of the printing an edition of the Malay Bible.' To be very earnest on spiritual subjects, and to wait patiently, is no common attainment. In the genuine spirit of humiliation, Mr. Thomason, seeing at present but little good effected amongst the heathen in Calcutta, whilst he continued praying for that city, reverted often for consolation to Agra: There, together with Abdool Messee's exertions, his friend and brother Mr. Corrie's efforts were stamped with marked success.

Concerning Mr. Corrie and his labours he uses these terms : ‘ He wins all hearts, European as well as native. My soul greatly rejoiceth in the good that is doing there, and when I look around and see the comparatively barren fields of Calcutta, I rejoice in the waving crops of Agra. You have scarcely an idea of his valuable qualities and fitness for Indian labour. He is patient, humble, mild, full of love, always alive to his work, apt to teach, ever on the look out, richly furnished with argument and exhortation and holy unction. Having seen much of him lately, now he is at a distance, the remembrance of him is sweet. His very image does me good. Abdool is another Corrie, with a prodigious store of eloquence and practical wisdom.’

The appearance of a new Governor General in India has a sensible effect upon the still surface of an Indian life. Nor is the excitement it occasions of short continuance : it requires time before things can subside into their ordinary quiescence. Like steel filings when the magnet is introduced, at such a moment all is motion and attraction ; multitudes are considering the aspect it may have on their own private interests ; others are inquiring, their affections being set on things above, what will be its bearing on questions of everlasting moment. In the middle of October 1813, the Earl of Moira arrived at Fort William ; and whilst the guns

were announcing that he was in the midst of those he was to govern, Mr. Thomason with many other Christians was revolving whether a revocation might be obtained of that cruel edict which had expelled some missionaries, and had driven others to the outskirts of the empire. ‘Our new Governor General,’ Mr. Thomason says, ‘is arrived. Hope is revived. His language will not I hope be altered by the climate of India: He comes with noble intentions and great promises. What he will do cannot be conjectured—but he is about to be put to a hard trial. The late Governor having peremptorily ordered all the missionaries away who came from America, they went to Bombay. There a government order followed them, commanding Sir Evan Nepean to send them off by the first opportunity. Sir Evan is their friend, but cannot resist authority. Mr. Udney, Dr. Carey, and myself, are about to prepare a memorial to the new government on the subject, entreating permission for the missionaries to reside quietly in the country. We should not have chosen so early and strong a test of Lord Moira’s principles, if we had been left to our own judgment. *But the ship in which the dear missionaries are ordered away is on the point of sailing.* If speedy exertion be not made, they will be gone. May it please God to touch the heart of the Governor General and incline him to comply with

our request ! They are good men, full of zeal, ripe for usefulness—the harvest great. The expence of their journeying already is enormous—what a reproach that a Christian government should turn them back, and sport with the best interests of its subjects !

Ineffectual was this earnest appeal of Christian brethren. Messrs Nott and Hall were compelled to leave India, and whilst withdrawing from a land which was not worthy of them, they put forth this vindication of their characters and principles. It was addressed to Sir Evan Nepean.

“ We looked upon the heathen—and alas ! though so many had passed away, three-fourths of the inhabitants of the globe had not been told that Jesus “ had tasted death for every man.” We saw them following their fathers in successive millions to eternal death. The view was overwhelming—the convictions of our own duty were as clear as noon—and our desire was ardent to bear to the dying heathen, the glad tidings of great joy. Affected and convinced as we were—though fastened to our country by the strongest ties ; though we had aged parents to comfort, and beloved friends to enjoy ; though urged by affectionate congregations to stay and preach the gospel to them—we were compelled to leave all, and come to this land with the prospect of no temporal advantage, but with the



prospect, nay certainty, of much temporal loss and even suffering, should our lot be cast under a heathen government. We were determined to deliver our message, at the hazard of every personal convenience or suffering, trusting in God, who guides the ways of all men, and willing to abide his allotments.

“ Confident as we are of none other than the best intentions, we most earnestly hope, and anxiously desire and pray, that the time may not be distant, when we shall be freed from the painful duty of vindicating ourselves, and then shall enter with joy and thanksgiving upon that work for which we are already strangers and pilgrims, and have no certain dwelling-place ; but the matter rests with God : on him we will endeavour quietly and patiently to wait ; to him we will look to bear us through our present trials, to publish his own gospel to the dying heathen, and to honour his dishonoured Son among all nations.”

Mr. Thomason's efforts proving to be without avail, they left this solemn expostulation with the Governor of Bombay, not as an individual, but *as the organ* of an authority in their judgment at variance with the injunctions of Christ. It was written in the spirit of the apostles, who ‘ departed from the council ; ’ and could scarcely be read by those in power, without raising the thrilling emotions of admiration, regret, and shame.

“ We would solemnly appeal to your Excellency’s conscience, and ask, Does not your Excellency believe that it is the will of Christ, that his gospel should be preached to these heathens? Do you not believe that we have given a credible testimony that we are ministers of Christ, and have come to this country to preach His gospel? Would not prohibiting us from preaching here be a known resistance to his will? Can you justify such an exercise of your power to your God and final Judge?


“ It is our ardent wish that your Excellency would compare most seriously such an exercise of civil authority with the general spirit and tenor of our Saviour’s commands. We most earnestly entreat you not to send us away from these heathens. We intreat you by the time and money already expended on our mission; by the Christian hopes and prayers attending it, we entreat you by the spiritual misery of the heathen daily perishing before your eyes; we entreat you by the blood of Jesus, which was shed to redeem them; as ministers of Him who has all power in heaven and earth, and who with his farewell and ascending voice, commanded his ministers to go and teach all nations, we intreat you not to prohibit us from teaching these heathens. By all the principles of our holy religion by which you hope to be saved, we intreat you not to prevent

us from preaching the same religion to these perishing idolaters. By all the solemnities of the judgment day, when your Excellency must meet your heathen subjects before God's tribunal, we entreat you not to hinder us from preaching to them that gospel, which is able to prepare them, as well as you, for that awful day."

Mr. Thomason's interference in behalf of these men of God, though unsuccessful, was far from prejudicing him in the eyes of the Governor General. He often attended the mission-church, notwithstanding its unfashionable character, and appointed its minister to perform stated service at Barrackpoor, his own country residence; he fixed upon him also to accompany him as chaplain in a journey of state through the provinces; and as a yet further proof of the manner in which he appreciated his talents and judgment, he commissioned him in the early part of 1814 to draw up and submit to the government a plan for the education of the Indian population. He granted permission likewise to Mr. Thomason to have the labours of his assistant made *permanent*, a measure which he more highly prized than any personal favour in the power of the Governor General to grant.

"Public and private duties," he writes, "increase upon me. Where there is too much burden, part must be neglected, and very much imperfectly sustained. I see so many

things undone, and so many things ill-done, I am continually sighing for help. Relief I trust is near. This important field of labour will not, I hope, be left unprovided with labourers. It seems strange that young men have not been more ready to follow up the work of God in India. Perhaps the danger of the sea and climate are overrated. They are not so formidable as timid people consider them. But even if they were, when we see them continually encountered in the pursuit of honour and wealth, it is somewhat reproachful that pious students of the ministry should be deterred. Last Thursday I finished my lectures on St. John ;— I have been four years and a half in going through that edifying gospel ; and I may add, with thankfulness to the great Head of the church, not without many cheering tokens of his presence. Our congregation on Thursday evening evidently improves. On Sunday evenings too we are well filled, in the mornings we have a regular congregation. Whilst the power of religion is progressive among Europeans, it is matter of great joy to see that the work prospers in different parts of the country. The Scriptures are in continual motion, in different languages and with increasing success. To God be the glory. It is surprising how all domestic arrangements on your side of the water and ours dwindle into insignificance. It seems a matter of unspeakable indifference whether our



children are in town or country, in India or in England, or what becomes of them and ourselves, provided we are all at our posts, serving the Lord in our respective spheres, living to his glory, and labouring for his cause. Then all prospers. We sometimes feel however as if we should like to have all things our own way—many Martyns—a host of Corries—daily conversions.’

## CHAPTER IX.

THE expedition of the Governor General through British India, which was conducted upon a scale of more than common magnificence, could not but supply matter of continual interest to Mr. Thomason, but the true Christian—still more the Christian minister and missionary beholds all around him, as he does all within, in the light of the word of God. What to the king of old appeared a golden image, to the prophet was as four beasts coming out of a tempestuous ocean. Many circumstances conspired to make Mr. Thomason undertake this voyage of eight hundred miles, succeeded by a journey of fifteen hundred. Change of scene and of climate was likely to prove exhilarating and reviving; new and less fatiguing duties were advantageous—his church was to undergo repair, his flock was superintended by one in whom he had confidence; and he expected, not without reason, in accompanying the Governor General, to obtain much information concerning the education of the natives, and to enjoy the most favourable opportunities of urg-

ing his lordship's attention to their wretched condition. He could not, however, leave an affectionate people for the long period contemplated without pain; of which, perhaps, he was more than usually susceptible, from a recent excitement of his sensibilities in sending his eldest son to England. Concerning that event, he thus expresses himself—'The bracing air of Europe we hope will do him good; how greatly shall I rejoice, if he should prove willing, and qualified to follow his father to India, and labour here in the gospel. But this is with the Lord. *I dare not plan; but, blessed be God, I can pray.* I cannot convey to you what his poor mother felt; my own pangs seem to have been forgotten in her's. O it was a bitter parting! However, it is now over, and we both acquiesce in the step as wise and proper. It is one of the greatest parental duties to send him home—can a parent then hesitate?'

To his mother at Chatpoor Ghaut, June 23, 1814, Mr. Thomason thus writes when on the point of commencing his projected tour; 'Whilst Mr. Robertson takes care of my church, I am proceeding on a new work, under very new circumstances. The Governor's party is very large; near 500 boats attended him. He is splendid and stately, and his march through the country will be more magnificent than that of any pre-

ceding Governor. The opportunity of seeing the country, and conversing with every person of intelligence and piety may be highly important. I mean to keep the grand object in view, the formation and execution of school plans. Sabat, the translator, accompanies me ; our Arabic version therefore continues, and the proof sheets follow us up the country. My public ministerial work will be one service on Sundays, in the family boat of the Governor General, to which the party will have access. Corrie has been again attacked with his old complaint. He wrote to me a fortnight ago, begging my advice as to his going home. I could not hesitate to recommend the measure ; strongly as we shall feel and mourn, yet for as much as the work of Christ is the most blessed of all works, it is fit that he should flee, that his precious life may be prolonged for future good. I expect we shall meet on the river ; when we come to his widowed church at Agra, we shall find sorrow, where we looked for joy. Corrie goes, who is the leader, the pattern, the father. O, when shall we see more labourers arrive in our vineyard ! Yet we rejoice in the Lord's presence, and believing that He acts in a manner to us invisible and inscrutable, we can look to him through the gloom, and go forward with hope. I felt much at parting with the dear people ; the affection of many was called forth. On the two last



Thursdays evenings, I have been taking leave, conceiving that, the important concern for us all is to see that we have the grace of God in truth, and walk consistently with such a profession. I spoke on the parable of the virgins for the former subject, on that of the talents for the latter, concluding on Sunday with a sermon on following peace and holiness. On these occasions I have delivered my whole soul, and now looking back on my ministry, I mourn over its unprofitableness. O that the blessing of God may come down on Mr. Robertson, and prosper his ministry! separate in body, I am still with him and his flock in spirit; if spared to return to my charge, may I come to it in more life, and love, and earnestness.'

On the 7th of August, beyond Monghir, he thus addressed J. Sherer, Esq. one of his congregation at Calcutta, for whom his Christian love had an unusual ardency. 'Mr. Simeon's letter contains an account of the death of our dear friend, Dr. Jowett, whose loss cast a mournful solemnity over the anniversary of the Bible Society. That very interesting account I sent by Sabat, who left me at Monghir.—The divinity of Dr. — is very poor indeed; we are justified by faith alone, but then the good works are foreseen, and *therefore* grace imparted!—The intelligence from home is most gratifying. Young men are continually coming forward, but no Martyn. It is surprising India

should be so little thought of by our young students. The intelligence of Dr. Middleton's appointment is interesting to us. His work on the Greek Article is of the first order; surely the author of such a work will be an episcopal man in the true sense of the word. At Monghir I was asked to preach in the evening for the benefit of the station. A few invalids attended, and a band of eight or ten European residents. We were detained a week, the weather wet and gloomy, and all beginning to feel the effects of a very unwholesome spot. We were anchored in a low marshy place, at a distance from the hills. The rapidity of the current at the Bastion point was not to be encountered by the Goon-ropes, and some were obliged to wait. I can ill describe the vexation and discontent, and complainings of almost all in the fleet. It was indeed a sufficiently dull week, where there were no resources. What a mercy to be relieved from the tedium and disgust to which we find so many a prey. Here we are in one little cabin, cheerful and happy, and constantly employed. When we are engaged in our morning and evening readings, the heart overflows with thankfulness for the distinguishing blessings God confers upon us, in having given us a love for his word, and a desire after a remembrance of his name. We sung together this morning, the hymn so obnoxious to Dr. —, and

could rejoice in the thought, that the fountain is opened to us guilty, polluted sinners. The defilement of sin is not more felt, because the glory of God is not more seen. One glimpse of his holy character will make us lie low in the dust. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; but fallen man is without God in the world; how great is the blessing to have his authority in some measure restored, and his throne set up in the heart. I hear Mr. Robertson is not quite well, pray tell me the truth; he must not be overworked. I am within call—whenever you say ‘it is time to come back, the church wants you,’ I shall apply for dismissal.

The moral and religious condition of the country which Mr. Thomason was traversing, kindled in his bosom, almost at every new reach of the river, and at every resting place at night, an increase of that compassionate zeal which had led him before he left Calcutta, to draw up and present to the Governor General a plan for the instruction of the Hindoos. His comments written between Mirzapore and Alahabad are these :—

‘ In ascending the Ganges, and visiting the towns and villages on its banks, we see the enormous population of degraded beings with our eyes. The first place of importance was Moorshedabad, the once famous metropolis of Bengal, an immense city swarming with inhabi-

tants, but exhibiting the sad marks of decayed greatness. Oh, it was an affecting sight to look around at the countless throngs, and observe moral, political, and religious degradation, without one cheering symptom of improvement. We have annihilated the political importance of the natives, stripped them of their power, and laid them prostrate, without giving them any thing in return. They possess neither learning, nor emulation, nor power. Every spring of action seems deadened; they wallow in the filth of a senseless and impure religion, without any prospect of deliverance. You can conceive nothing more wretched than Hindoo towns and villages. Nothing like architecture, except in their temples; the streets narrow and dirty, the houses inexpressibly mean, teeming with inhabitants whose appearance is disgusting in the extreme. At Benares, I ventured to visit the shrine held so sacred. It was an oppressive sight. The avenues to it are narrow, crowded with Brahmins and bulls: the symbols of their impure religion, meet the eye in every corner; and the horrid din of the Brahmins, and Fakcers, and bulls, and beggars, and bells, was too much to be endured. I hastened from the place, as from Pandæmonium, and thanked God for the gospel. If I do not return to my charge with more of a missionary spirit, it will be my own fault. To behold such

a mass of putrified matter, and not be concerned about providing the means of life and health, is criminal in the extreme. Blessed be God for some little zeal. Had I obtained nothing more than an increased sense of the importance of ministerial labour, I should be richly repaid.

Mr. Thomason had not sailed long with Lord Moira before he perceived with no little regret, that, instead of being more earnest respecting education in proportion as he beheld accumulated proofs of its necessity, he became, *in appearance*, less alive to it as a matter of excellent policy, and imperious obligation. The outline of the plan that had been proposed was, that schools should be established in every part of India; one principal one in every district for the instruction of the natives in the English language and science; under the school and subordinate to the master village schools, where the children should be instructed to read and write in their own language. The books to be selections from the moral and sacred writings of Christians, Mahometans, and Hindoos. To supply the district schools, that there should be a school for schoolmasters in Calcutta, under the direction of a man of science and literature, the whole to be under a head, called Agent for the superintendence of schools throughout India.

Concerning this plan, Lord Moira had ex-

pressed himself as highly pleased, and held out a hope, that with some modifications, it might be adopted. But good intentions suffer strange syncope: mysterious under-currents often carry away stately vessels from their bearings: so it was in this instance. Influential persons at Calcutta exerted an adverse power on the Governor-General's mind, and in vain did Mr. Thomason attempt to counteract this influence, and to revive first impressions. 'I endeavoured,' he says 'in the most solemn manner, to rouse the governor to a sense of the importance of the crisis, and of the high duties to which he was called. I look around and see a vast ocean, in the truest and most affecting sense of Homer's epithet, barren of all good.'

An example of Indian munificence exhibited at this time at Benares, formed a humiliating contrast to English supineness. By it Mr. Thomason was at once shamed and cheered: 'Near a celebrated Hindoo tank, I have seen,' he says, 'the foundation of Jay Narrain's School; he met me there, and shewed me the grounds, large and pleasantly situate: close by the house was a path, along which 120,000 Hindoos passed every week to bathe. He now says he is ready to pay the money for the school in the Company's paper, if the Governor will guarantee its application, and place it under the direction of the collector,

to be paid regularly to the school-master.' Will it be credited that this largeness of heart, though *admired* in the highest quarter, was nevertheless *suspected*. The relation between rulers and subjects in arbitrary and anomalous governments, are so disturbed and brought into so morbid a condition, that attempts to act aright on either side, tend to awaken dormant jealousies. It seems that they must distrust analogy and experience, before they can trust each other.'

At Cawnpore, the magnificence of the Governor General's retinue was emulated and augmented by that of an Eastern Nabob, who appeared on the other side the river with a large encampment. The two territories were joined together by a bridge of boats, and over the subjected waters of the Ganges, trains of mighty elephants and costly presents were passing and re-passing. But for all this pageantry Mr. Thomason had no eyes. He was on the very spot where Martyn lived and laboured : his house with the long line of aloes leading to it, was in sight ; his past course of devotedness unto death, his present never-dying joys filled his thoughts : the vision that appeared to the mental eye was shadowy, but not unsubstantial ; and all the fascinations of pomp vanished before it. What are Nabobs and governors of mighty empires compared with one such minister serving the Lord on earth with all humility,

amidst tears and temptations, and then “walking high in salvation, and the climes of bliss.”

‘ In these sandy plains I have been tracing again and again the days of Martyn. Close by me is the house that dear minister occupied, leading to which is the gloomy line of aloes spoken of by Mrs. Sherwood. ‘ On the other side of the Ganges is the Nabob with a large encampment, between whom and the Governor General, the civilities are numerous.

‘ But how poor are the trappings of royalty, and the pomps and vanities of the world! All who take a near view of the grandeur of earthly monarchs, discern its intrinsic nothingness; yet they follow it, pant after it, worship it. Awfully is the soul fallen from its original character; we catch at straws when we ought to be holding fast the crown of life.

‘ O for Martyn’s humility and love: (he afterwards wrote,) those who knew him can bear testimony to the truth of his Christian walk. His standard of every duty was the highest, and his feelings of joy, sorrow, love, most intense; whilst his conversation was always in heaven, the savour of his holy dispositions was as ointment poured forth. Many parts of his experience can only be appreciated by those who enter deeply into the divine life. In proportion as we discern what is spiritual in its excellence and glory, we



shall understand his lowly self-abasing<sup>3</sup> reflections on what he observed within. He was transported by a glory, of which common Christians only obtain a glimpse. And O how is all explained, when we behold him entering his closet, and holding communion with God with such delight, such unwearied constant enjoyment! Woe unto us if we do not pray more, live more above the world, and deny ourselves more, and love Christ more. Are we not hoping to see him in a happier state: the Lord quicken us, and enable us to go forward, “laying aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”’

Leaving Cawnpore, Mr. Thomason began what to him was a novel and strange mode of life; marching and living in tents. The party proceeded by easy stages twelve miles a day, rising by gun-fire, when it was quite dark in the morning they arrived at their ground a little after sunrise. ‘Conceive,’ as he says,—‘describing his journey, an immense plain, on which are scattered thousands of villages, a few principal towns without variety, and a vast multitude of inhabitants: when you have seen one village or town, you have seen all, they are without any of those marks of opulence, civilization, or elegance which delight the English traveller. Those persons who are

distinguished for their wealth, are few, and they shun the presence of Europeans: their manners and their dress are similar to those of their inferiors: the effect of English superiority is of the most gloomy nature.'

It was not long after entering upon the second part of this expedition, that Mr. Thomason's zeal, fidelity, and boldness, as well as his wisdom and discretion, were signally put to the proof. He soon discovered to his sorrow, that the Governor-General when travelling, paid no regard to the Christian sabbath. As his chaplain therefore, he deemed it incumbent on him, to notice this violation of the day of rest. Perceiving, however, when he had hoped his suggestions had been attended to, and his object attained, that arrangements were making on the Saturday for moving the next day; his conscience told him that he should be wanting in allegiance to the Lord of the Sabbath, if yielding to natural inclinations, he offered no remonstrance. Painful therefore as the measure was, he hesitated not to adopt it. The reply was, *his dismissal from the camp*. The rigour of this stern and haughty step, was indeed tempered by an intimation from the Secretary, that an apology would be accepted. To apologize when in error, was as congenial to Mr. Thomason's conciliating disposition, as it was to his religious principles: but in this case

apology was out of the question. Yet as explanation was both admissible and becoming, he instantly wrote to the Governor-General, 'expressing his surprise at this order, but his readiness at the same time to comply with it; adding that *he felt as strongly as ever the importance of the subject, and thought it the duty of a minister of religion, to explain his views when the honour of God and interests of religion were concerned*; but that he lamented, that any thing should have appeared in the expression of his sentiments that was thought disrespectful. Thus did he unite deference for the authority of the Governor, and courtesy towards him as man, with deference to the paramount authority of God, and uncompromising integrity.

The Governor-General was satisfied, and for a time respect was paid to the sabbath-day.

• To what *dangers*, as well as inconvenience, a separation from the main party would have led, may be seen in this statement. 'Even on our line of march, we are subject to depredation. The camel, with his Lordship's table, was taken by Decoits two nights ago; and a little before, three camels: we dread single travelling, which even on the river would be dangerous, if the news from the armies continues as unfavourable as it has been. Who can tell what is before us? the war-trumpet has sounded.' From thoughts

of war and rumours of war, Mr. Thomason's mind was withdrawn delightfully at Kurnall. There he found some artillery men, from a number who knew Mr. Corrie and loved him. These Christian soldiers came to Mr. Thomason's tent for prayer and exposition of the Scriptures, and (said he who ministered amongst them)—‘even in this jungle, we could rejoice together in remembrance of the love of Christ. All the places, (he added) where troops are usually stationed, are empty. There is nothing to amuse a traveller who does not hunt: however, I hope my time is not wholly lost; my little Hindoostanee church has lately received an accession by one of the converts from Agra, a pious humble Christian: we are now a little company, and spend many a happy hour together over the Scriptures. With these beloved fellow-travellers, I am often solaced amidst the sickening frivolities of the camp. Since we left Hindostan, Sunday has not been observed as a day of rest; yet the Governor halts to get ready for a tiger hunt. The kingdoms of this world will have their own pursuits and enjoyments, they are not those of the kingdom of Christ. The experience I have had of this, will, I trust, be useful to me, and certainly, intercourse with native schools, and daily Hindoostanee preaching, have contributed much to enlarge my heart towards the perishing heathen. Corrie's fatherly

attention to his flock was truly lovely. Nothing of an abiding nature can be done without love, that love which arises from Christian principles, and is kept up by close walking with God. I pray for more of it. By love God works with us, and by love we must work with others. Enoch's walk was a walk of love. Sometimes I try to analyse in a practical way, this one word, love, and find it full of affecting truths. We know little about it. Humility, holiness, faith, hope, gratitude, all these working in their degree, dilate the contracted heart. In proportion to the intenseness of them, is the intenseness of our love. Where there is nothing of them, all that looks like love is selfish, depraved, earthly principle. I could prove this, and do so to myself every day;) I see a vast quantity of rubbish, spurious love, animal warmth, sanguine self-complacency, self-righteous exertion, usurping the place of love, wearing its garb, talking its language. Is this wonderful, when there is so much pride? The first step in the ladder is humility. The Lord help us to gain it, and to go step by step, till we have got to the region of love.'

On the 6th of March 1815, Mr. Thomason completed the least pleasing part of his journey, and again embarked on board a vessel at Caunpore finding the tranquillity of floating down the

Ganges pleasant, after the bustle of a camp, and the din of tent pins and camels. He then had leisure to look back at events and places, and thus depicts the desolation he had witnessed.

‘To have once taken the tour of the Bengal provinces, will be of great advantage in future operations. But there is nothing to tempt a second visit. To a feeling heart, the prospect of desolation is most distressing. The country affords much to gratify a naturalist, and an antiquarian ; but the pursuits of such persons require time and leisure. We only passed through, and saw the “immense plains of Hindostan, in all their nakedness, the dire effects of those contentions, which for centuries have depopulated the country, and covered its face with ruins. ‘The ruins of Delhi are of surprising extent, reaching sixteen miles or more ; a sickening sight! O it made us sad to go through the awful scene of desolation. Mosques, temples, houses, all in ruins ; piles of stones, broken pillars, domes, crumbling walls covered the place. The imperial city presents nothing but the palace to give an idea of its greatness, and only appears grand from the magnificent wall with which it is surrounded, which still retains its beauty—being built of hard stone. Within is poverty and departed grandeur—all is going to decay. The famous hall of audience remains, built of marble,

richly inlaid with stones sufficiently beautiful to realize all our expectations. We saw in the gardens the reigning prince, the poor representative of Timur's house. He was taking an airing, carried on a Tonjoh—(a chair borne on shoulders) preceded by a train of attendants bawling out his titles; he bowed to us, and appeared an intelligent man. The courts of the palace—the attendants—the offices of the servants—all gave an appearance of wretchedness one could not behold without a sigh.'

From Allahabad, March 12, 1815, the following letter was written by Mr. Thomason to that friend whom distance and space seemed to bring into closer union. A vigorous pulse of piety beats through the whole of it.

TO THE REV. MR. SIMEON.

' ' Since I wrote last, our hearts have been made glad by many of your most welcome and affectionate letters. . . . I proceed to give some account of my progress. In my last I talked about school plans, and the object of my accompanying Lord Moira. I had a poor account to give. The prospect was far from encouraging; nor has it much improved. I mentioned having seen an answer sent from the Council at Calcutta. That answer afforded decisive evidence of the present temper of the majority in the Indian Government,

and led me to think that nothing would be done in this country until the *command* reach us *from home*. I see no reason to alter this opinion; trifling half measures may be set on foot sufficient to satisfy conscience, but wholly inadequate to the country's wants. In our long march the subject was often discussed; many plans have been proposed, and his lordship who seems bent on doing something, has been at last drawn to a plan for schools of industry, which seem to take with him surprisingly. A plan of this nature was proposed to Council many years ago, but laid by in the records of the police office, out of which it was lately drawn and presented to —, by the superintendent of police. It suggests the establishment of schools of industry for vagabonds, thieves, and criminals of all descriptions, something like our Philanthropic Society at home. This is good as far as it goes. To employ the time well, is to keep out of mischief, and if habits of industry are acquired much has been done. But is this all? Suppose fifty such schools to be established through the country, shall we have provided for the existing wants of the people? Shall we have done all that a Christian parental government ought to have done? Are we to fritter away our plans of teaching into a plan for workhouses? In answer to these questions they will say that instruction will form a part of the



plan; that the children will be taught to read and write. But this is only to silence the anxious objector, the real thing aimed at in such institutions is labour; the subordinate object, instruction, will become a mere nominal part of the establishment. If we would *reform* effectually, we must *instruct*, and if we would *instruct* effectually, we must have institutions in which instruction holds the principal place. Greatly shall I lament to see our funds, small and inadequate as they are, wasted upon schools of industry. Such schools will not raise this *fallen, fallen race*; they will not strike at the root of the evil, they will leave the natives in the state of degradation in which they now lie. I can only raise a feeble voice, but this, as long as I have power and opportunity to speak, I must do.

‘In the discussion of these subjects, and conversations with different persons through the country, our journeying has come to an end. From Lucknow we proceeded to Bareilli, thence to Moorshedabad and Hurdwar. This last is a most interesting spot. It is a pass in the northern frontier mountains through which the Ganges in a few insignificant streams flows into the plains of Hindostan. At this place the water is remarkably pure, and an annual fair is held, which is resorted to by Hindoos to a vast amount (near a million it has been thought) for ablution in the sacred

stream. The spot is romantic and beautiful ; very interesting it was to view the Ganges rolling between the mountains, and contemplating its progressive and mighty increase in a course of near 1400 miles. Is this the majestic Ganges, we asked, which flows so deeply and widely, and waters the thirsty plains of India? At Hurdwar we spent Christmas day, and for the first time I believe the death of Christ was commemorated by a Christian congregation at that celebrated spot which is as the throne of Satan. Amidst all my ministerial discouragements, I thanked God and took courage. Who knows what rapid progress may be made by the Gospel, which appears now flowing like the Ganges at Hurdwar, but may perhaps ere long fill the earth with gladness.

The thermometer on Christmas day at sunrise was as low as 27, a degree of cold we had not experienced since we left England. On two or three occasions afterwards it was at 25. From Hurdwar we proceeded, with the majestic snowy mountains of Nepaul in view as we travelled through Kirnaul and Nansi (crossing the Jumna) to the imperial city of Delhi—from Delhi to Murat and Agra. Before we arrived at Agra it was settled that Lord Moira would not return to Calcutta till next cold weather. I requested permission, therefore to return home ; and his lordship having given us leave to do so,

we proceeded straight to Duttyghur, where we took to our boat, in which we are proceeding down the river towards Calcutta: we hope in three days to arrive at Benares. We had a pleasant parting with his Lordship; he expressed his hope to me that something would result from the information we had collected on the journey, and that the hints which had been furnished would be gathered up and become productive of some beneficial plans of instruction, of the need of which he felt as much assured as ever. On the whole I felt as if my connection with this party had not been without its use. I have had frequent opportunities of suggesting what appeared adviseable, and now part from them with a promise of communicating from time to time what may be interesting in my department. Having now seen all the principal stations and principal people in these parts, I return much better qualified to judge of many things than I could have been if I had continued in Calcutta. But schools have not yet been formed. The prospect indeed has become darker rather than otherwise. For want of the true rallying point, philanthropic benevolence sinks before the opposition and indifference which oppose efficient plans of usefulness.

‘The Nepaul war broke out at Lucknow, and the first operation was disastrous; it produced the loss of General Gillepsie, one of our ablest gene-

erals. The despised Goorkahs are formidable enemies, and the contest is likely to prove very arduous.

‘Whilst we were harassed with bad news from the armies, the paper announced the arrival of Dr. Middleton, our bishop. Here is a man of peace come amongst us for works of peace. Even in troublous times our Jerusalem may be built. All the accounts have been favourable. He has commenced with a noble confession of his principles and motives for coming to India. Our friends have been made glad and have gladdened us by their accounts.

‘I hope to know him soon, and pray that my report may be such as will give you joy. You have made us glad with your notice of a new chaplain. Oh that it may please God to regard us with compassion, and incline the hearts of his servants to come over and help us. We want *learning* as well as *piety*. It would make your heart ache to go through this land. Whoever comes, must make up his mind to labour, and prepare for discouragements. I cannot use flattering speeches to allure my brethren. They must be prepared to fight battles, and must expect disappointments. India is a scene of peculiar trial. Our hopes are often blasted: if we are very sanguine and impatient, we must smart for it. We must learn to *plough in hope, to wait, to pray, and to believe*. Adversaries

abound whose mouths are ever open, and who have many grounds of offence in the fickleness of professors, and instability of the native converts. The trial is sharp, and such as the gospel only can carry us through. We have had a fresh cause of grief in the relapse of Sabat. I never thought well of him. He left me at Monghir, after completing the New Testament: on his return to Calcutta, he published a book against the Christian religion. I have as yet only seen the title page. He calls it *Sabatean proofs of the truth of Islamism, and falsehood of Christianity*; he pretends to pull down the pillars of our faith, and in a pompous page has expressed all the bitterness, and arrogance, and profaneness of his character, declaring that he has printed the book, not 'for any private emolument, but as a free-will offering to God.' It is a public and bitter avowal of his hypocrisy in all his dealings with us, and the scandal occasioned, is greater than you can imagine. Those who were inclined to favour our attempts with the natives, are many of them prejudiced. The bishop is grieved. I have learned some useful lessons; to be cautious in judging—to be backward in praising—above all, to be careful how we publish the tidings of our operations.

'We need much divine wisdom, and holy discernment.' It is not to be conceived by those

who are connected with them, how expert the natives are in every art of deception. I hope we shall guard against talking of Abdool Messeh. With every hope of his being a real Christian, it is prudent to say little. I pray that he may be kept in humility, and in active labour, until our brother return to us. Abdool needs Corrie, and so does the church at large. A fitter instrument for leading on the native converts, for winning the affections of the people, and carrying on missionary labours, can hardly be found. They speak of him at Agra with tears : his *love* has won them all. He was, humanly speaking, their stay and centre of union. This and every other care, I desire to leave to our gracious Head : to whom every disappointment should draw us more closely. To him as the good Shepherd, I desire to look for all my strength, and for all my fruitfulness, and to him I commit yourself and people, all of *you*, and all of *us*, evermore."

## CHAPTER X.

MR. Thomason's reunion with his flock at Calcutta, at the end of May 1815, was an event of mutual joy to himself and them. 'All our old feelings were more than renewed. I was received with a cordiality I ought never to forget. Surely I am bound to this people by ties, which can be broken only by death, or rather by bonds of love, which death will only strengthen.' Such were his heart-felt expressions on re-joining his congregation. An additional satisfaction did he enjoy in welcoming to India a clergyman<sup>1</sup> of sentiments and spirit congenial to his own. He had left England with a wife and eight children, that he might devote himself and them to the service of his Redeemer, in that land of pagan ignorance. The sight of such a man in such a country, an answer to many a fervent prayer, was a ground for ardent thanksgiving. His continuance likewise at Calcutta, during the year of his arrival, was a seasonable succour to Mr.

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Mr. Fisher.

Thomason, whilst the attendants at the Mission church rejoiced in another faithful witness for the truth amongst them. Some drawback to these gratifications was the refusal of the Bishop to open and consecrate the Mission Church: the disappointment was the greater, because Mr. Thomason had confidently calculated upon his Lordship's compliance with his desires, and because the reason alleged for refusal, that the patronage was vested in individuals, and not in the company, (an opinion no doubt most conscientiously entertained,) carried with it no conviction of its soundness to Mr. Thomason's judgment; nor is it to be questioned, had such sentiments constantly and universally prevailed, that few churches would have been erected in our land. But vexations are comparative. This, though not slight, dwindled into nothing contrasted with the keen anguish, occasioned by those remarks with which Calcutta rung, concerning Sabat's virulent attack on that faith, from which he had apostatized. The effect of his treatise on the Mahometan mind, might, it was feared, be very unfavourable; that of the apostacy itself on numbers calling themselves Christians, was instantly and extensively prejudicial. It increased the innate enmity of the natural heart against that spirituality in religion, which contains its very root, and flower, and fruit, that



without which it is dead and worthless; it increased and strengthened suspicions against native converts; it gave birth to fiercer invectives against Missionaries, and more contemptuous ridicule of their exertions. As when Judas acted the traitor—Ananias the liar—Simon Magus the refined hypocrite—so it was when Sabat daringly departed from the nominal profession of the truth. The righteous sorrowed, the unrighteous triumphed: yet wisdom was justified of her children. Happily for Mr. Thomason and the inhabitants of Calcutta, the apostate soon deserted Bengal for a distant settlement. There, after no long interval, political intrigues brought him to an appalling end. A British officer, Colonel Mac Innes, resident at Penang, has detailed the termination of his career. The account was printed in French at Geneva, in an appendix to the translation to the memoir of H. Martyn's life, and by the friendly consent of the author, himself a friend of Mr. Thomason, is inserted here.

‘I became personally acquainted with Sabat at Penang, a little after his public abjuration of Christianity in Bengal. This deplorable act was followed by an unsuccessful trading voyage to Rangoon, after which he re-appeared at Penang, with the wreck of his fortune, in hope of better success.

‘During his stay in this island, I had the

opportunity of knowing him thoroughly. I saw in him a disappointed man, uneasy and agitated in his mind. He attributed all the distress of his soul, to the grief he felt for having abandoned Christianity. He desired to receive again this holy religion, as the only means of reconciling himself with God. He declared that he had not had a moment's peace since (at the instigation of Satan,) he had published his attack upon Revelation, an attack which he called his '*bad work*.' He told me also, that what had led him to this fatal step, was the desire of revenging himself upon an individual to whom he thought an attack upon Christianity would be more painful than any personal injury; but he had no sooner executed this detestable project (he added) than he felt a horror of the action, and now he only valued his life that he might be able to undo the pernicious tendency of his book, which he thought would be great in Mahometan countries. He never spoke of Mr. Martyn without the most profound respect, and shed tears of grief whenever he recalled how severely he had tried the patience of this faithful servant of God. He mentioned several anecdotes to show with what extraordinary sweetness Martyn had borne his numerous provocations. "He was less a man (he said) than an angel from heaven." His apostacy had excited much observation in the East: there appeared in

the Penang Gazette an article which announced the arrival and the opinions of this famous person, but which expressed at the same time the apprehension that was generally entertained of his sincerity. Sabat had no sooner read this article than without being offended by the little regard that seemed to be paid to his veracity, he wrote himself to the Editor. He affirmed that according to the general report he did indeed profess Christianity anew, and he declared that it was his intention to consecrate the remainder of his days to the advancement of this holy religion in the world. In conformity with these declarations rather than lodge with a Mahometan he went to stay at the house of an Armenian Christian named Johannes, a respectable merchant who had known him at the time of his baptism at Madras. While there he every evening read and expounded the Scriptures to the great satisfaction of his host, who was a very worthy man, but very inferior to Sabat in talents and knowledge, especially of the holy Scriptures. In this last respect I imagine few men have surpassed Sabat.

‘ But in spite of these promising appearances he continued to frequent the Mosque, where he worshipped indiscriminately with all the other Mahometans. When the inconsistency of such conduct was represented to him he cited the example of Nicodemus, who although a disciple

of Jesus, persevered in the public profession of Judaism, believing that thus he could better serve his Lord and Master, and this policy had never been blamed. Sometimes he reviewed the arguments in favour of Mahometanism as if to display his talents in defending a thesis which was manifestly untenable. He alleged amongst other things the promise of our Lord to send the Comforter, which the Mahometans not without some appearance of reason (he said) applied to their prophet. But soon forced to abandon this refuge as well as every other, he confessed, though with manifest repugnance, that Mahometanism only owed its success to fraud and violence, and that Mahomet himself deserved no better name than that of an impostor. During his stay at Penang, this island was visited by a Malay prince, Jouhuroolalim king of the neighbouring state of Acheen, (in the island of Sumatra,) from whence a revolt of his subjects had obliged him suddenly to flee. A great number of his subjects disgusted at seeing their prince associating with Europeans, wearing their dress, and imitating their dissolute manners, invited Seyyed Hosyn, a rich merchant of Penang, who had some pretensions to the throne, to come and assert his claims, and help them to depose Jouhuroolalim. Seyyed Hosyn, too far advanced in years to accept the offer for himself, made over the claims of the family to his

son, who under the name of Syfoolalim (sword of the universe) went to Acheen, and soon reduced the king to extremity. It was then that Jouhuroolalim appeared at Penang, as we have seen, in order to procure arms and provisions to recommence the struggle. Sabat offered his services to Jouhuroolalim, with no other end, as he assured me than to discover and profit by any favourable opportunity that should offer of introducing Christianity amongst the Acheenais, a nation which is particularly intractable and ferocious, and many of whom were cannibals. The imposing and even engaging manners which he could assume, his reputation as a man of talents, and the high esteem which the Indian nations have for Arabian auxiliaries, on account of their courage and intrepidity, procured him a favourable reception from Jouhuroolalim, in a moment when adversity had estranged from him all his European favourites. Sabat accompanied this prince to Acheen, where he soon gained such an ascendancy as to manage all public affairs, and was regarded by his adversaries as the greatest obstacle to their final triumph. But, as months rolled away without producing any decisive event, and the issue of the struggle appeared still doubtful and distant, Sabat resolved to retire. Whilst occupied in effecting his retreat he fell into the hands of Syfoolalim, who gave orders that he should be

strictly imprisoned on board a vessel, and after having made him suffer severely, he was tied up in a sack, and thrown into the sea.

‘ During his detention Sabat had written separately several notes to Johannes and me, calling on us to observe, that it was with his own blood that he had traced the characters, his enemies refusing him the usual materials. In these notes, written some in Persian, the others in bad English, he recited his sufferings, which he wished us to consider as the consequence of his attachment to Christianity, and that he was in some sense a martyr. Being a Malay interpreter belonging to the local government, I was the organ of communication with the states connected with Penang. In addressing himself to me therefore, Sabat hoped to obtain the intervention of the government in his favour ; as however he was not a British subject, and possessed no right to the protection of our government, he was disappointed in his expectation. Without loss of time I made use of my private influence with Seyyed Hosyn to ameliorate the captivity of Sabat, if I could not procure his enlargement. But his intriguing and dangerous character was too much dreaded to admit of his freedom, till public tranquillity was re-established. All that I could obtain was a promise that his life should be held sacred, that Hosyn would write to his son not to make any attempt against it, and

that he would mitigate the sufferings of his captivity. Whether the request of the father never reached the son, or whether the latter was only more embittered against Sabat by these effects in his favour cannot be known, but I had not the success I had desired, and some time after we learnt that the days of the unfortunate captive had been violently terminated by the frightful death that has been mentioned."

The narrator of the last scene in Sabat's earthly existence concludes with a hope that the penitence which was signified in words and signed with the unhappy captive's blood, did indeed emanate from his very heart. Charity would gladly welcome the faintest ray that pierced or seemed to pierce the gloom of such a death as that. He who fathoms the abyss of the human heart, may in his omniscience discern some pearls of sincerity, penitence, and faith, where to the eye of man all is darkness and despair. But apprehensions of tremendous import will force themselves on the mind; *there is* "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall consume the adversaries." "*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*"

A grateful relief it must have proved to Mr. Thomason's mind, and a pledge of brighter days for India, to have been engaged in the summer

of this year, in preparing the young of his flock for confirmation, a rite from which so many have dated the commencement of a course, pleasant and peaceful, in proportion to its devotedness, but which for centuries had not been administered in any Indian church, based solely on the word of God. Cheering likewise in the extreme, was it to one who lived but to be instrumental in diffusing blessings to others, to succeed in founding an establishment for which many an orphan in this and after ages will bless his memory.

The heart of an orphan Mr. Thomason himself knew: and he had drank also into his spirit, who said "I will not leave you comfortless:" 'The history of the design and state of the religious and charitable institutions of Calcutta,' in referring to the Female Orphan Institution, contains this statement:—'This most interesting institution, owes its origin to the vigilant benevolence of the Rev. Mr. Thomason: the destitute condition of the female orphans of the European soldiers belonging to the King's regiments, attracted his notice and commiseration. Deprived of their natural protectors, and left to the casual mercy of successive individuals, if they escaped the dangers of infancy, they were exposed to the corrupting influence of scenes of profligacy. To preserve such friendless children from contamination, Mr. Thomason proposed to



the community the establishment of the Female Orphan Asylum, July 1, 1815.'

In the march and triumph of every species of benevolence, calumny is an attendant. It was so in this instance: some persons misconceived, others maligned the project: at length however its merits were discovered, and it became 'a peculiar favourite with all classes of Europeans.' Fourteen thousand rupees in donations, and seven thousand in casual subscriptions, ere long were received; and of orphans admitted, the number rose from ten to above seventy; a spacious house too and grounds were purchased. The limitation of the asylum to the *legitimate* offspring of Europeans, was one of the features in the asylum that gave offence, and a correspondence of a trying description was the consequence. To the pious but erroneous address of one of the congregation, who deemed himself and his half-cast brethren aggrieved by some remarks on legitimacy, Mr. Thomason replied with admirable temper and with humility, such as a high tone of religion alone can produce. The letter of remonstrance is inserted with but little curtailment, in order that the spirit of the answer may be fully appreciated. A day is coming, when to have written such a letter as that of the minister rebuked, will be of far greater moment than to have achieved wonders unparalleled in literature or arms.

‘ REVEREND SIR,

‘ After mature consideration, I have prevailed on myself to undertake the arduous task of addressing a person of your sacred office. It must grieve you exceedingly as a Christian and a minister to learn that your late conduct has been productive of much mischief. It has caused contention and uneasiness, and the hearts of the righteous have been perplexed to see such inconsistency in a character so deservedly revered hitherto. I sincerely trust you do not need a remembrance of the obligations attached to the ministerial office; you had always possessed a shepherd’s heart as well as a shepherd’s eye. Whence then flows your present defection to the majority of your flock? What have we done to merit such severe reflections on a subject beyond our power to remedy? instead of oil, you pour vinegar on our wounded hearts. The bounds of our habitation were fixed by an omnipotent arm, nor were we in any degree accessory to our own existence. If sin is the cause of your dislike, you ought then as a faithful minister to strike at the fountain head of the torrent of iniquity so prevalent here; *apparently*, the fear of man draws a veil over the authors of our misery. The poor descendants of their shame and sin are unjustly held forth as public spectacles of universal contempt and derision. Could you not pursue an

object truly noble, and bestow your charity on those you deemed most worthy, without wounding the feelings of those from whom it is your pleasure to withhold it? Allow me, Reverend Sir, to add, that in this instance you have acted unadvisedly. Beware of the insidious instigations of those whose censorious conduct and harsh judgment of others have always been a source of scandal to the cause they profess, and have at length led our dear pastor into an error, from which we pray he may soon be extricated. “Woe unto the world because of offences,” by which the disciples of Christ, (though poor and despised) are discouraged and entangled; but when ministers by their uncharitable behaviour are the cause of such offences, whereby the weak-hearted are stumbled and sent back to feed on the husks, they bring guilt on themselves, and a deadness and inefficacy on their labours, and their usefulness slackens. Those ministers especially, who out of love to the souls of their fellow-sinners, have determined not to confine their scene of action within the limits of their own native land, but to extend their labours of love to this inhospitable clime, should come to us divested of all narrow prejudices (which a liberal mind should scorn to retain) against our country, our colour, and our manners, lest the operation of human frailty in that respect should prove a stumbling-block to many.

‘ Permit me to trespass a little further on your patience. If the diffusion of knowledge is universally allowed to be of the greatest utility in the promotion of civilization, as well as in raising the tone of morals in societies and individuals, why then should Mr. Thomason decree the country-born unworthy of so great a blessing? Is the turpitude of iniquity more inherent in them than the rest of Adam’s fallen race? If so, where is then the necessity of the Female Penitentiary, the Magdalen, or the Foundling Hospital in your own country. If nature in them is superior to others, does not education constitute the disparity? If so, why then deem it a grievance that the country-born should enjoy the benefits of the same tuition as the children of the Europeans? Since the great Creator of the universe has not withholden the endowment of the same mental powers, shall mortal man draw a line, and prohibit the cultivation of those faculties, which may render us useful members of society? Your own personal knowledge of many of our race must in a great measure point out the fallacy of such opinions. Do not many of them adorn their Christian profession by a consistent walk? and have not many sealed the testimony of divine truth with their expiring breath? one but very lately. Have not your own pulpit doctrines been the reverse of those sentiments that are now

disseminated far and wide? To all the charges preferred against our race, I plead guilty, humbly conscious that the seed of every sin, lies deep in our breasts; and if they have not been reduced into action, it is entirely of *grace*; but then the records of divine truth pronounce all under this sentence, "There is none righteous, no, not one." Where is boasting then? it is excluded. Let us drop the subject, and humbly wait our appointed time; it fast approaches, and ere long all shall be levelled in the dust. Till then,

I remain, Reverend Sir,

Your humble Servant,

ASIATICUS.'

Mr. Thomason's reply.

' I know not how to express to you adequately my obligations for your truly Christian letter. The piety, the affection, the respect, the humility which it breathes deeply affect me. You have with great delicacy and feeling touched every string which can move the heart of a minister who is at all alive to his important calling. I thank God my heart is not altogether insensible to those feelings, and I feel happy in the opportunity now afforded of doing all in my power to remove the misconceptions upon which your letter is founded.

' I say not this without much searching of heart

on the subject, and prayer that I may be led to a clear discovery of my own motives, as well as the path of duty on this painful occasion. Were I really guilty of that defection from the majority of my flock, and those severe reflections on the class of persons alluded to in your letter, I should not know how to appear again in your presence as your pastor; for it peculiarly becomes *us* to follow his example, whose tender mercies are over all his works, who is no respecter of persons, who has commissioned us to preach the gospel to all, and to spread the unsearchable riches of Christ with an equal hand, as far as we ourselves are acquainted with them, to high and low, rich and poor, one with another.

‘ Conscious of these sentiments, I have said above, after much self-examination, that your affectionate address to me is founded on misconception; for it supposes me either to have lost those feelings of regard which I once had for all indiscriminately, or never to have possessed them.

‘ That any thing said or done by me should have given occasion for such a misconception, I shall consider always as one of the greatest calamities of my life; for I desire, above all things, to live for the gospel of Christ, and such a misunderstanding must prove a great barrier to my future usefulness, if it be not removed. But as my heart acquits me, which your letter has

led me closely to examine, and that with many tears, I cannot but feel a strong hope that the same Christian principles and feelings which pervade *your* address to *me*, will accompany you in reading *this* address to *you*, which is intended as a simple and affectionate explanation of what has passed.

‘ The thought of a European Female Asylum, was suggested not by any proud or censorious individuals, but by an actual view of the state of things in our progress up and down the country. The destitute condition of those orphans presented itself to us on so many occasions, and was mentioned by so many persons acquainted with the King’s regiments, that we could not but consider them as *peculiar objects* of compassion ; and the reasons mentioned in the proposals for an Asylum occurred very forcibly to my mind, as constituting the grounds of a new institution for the reception of such orphans. I can truly say, as before God, that my only motive in this selection was charity to the *most distressed* and *most exposed*. A large institution for the reception of orphans was never contemplated ; the object appearing too great, and not so immediately necessary. This seemed to afford a *limited* sphere of important usefulness which might be occupied without any very extensive support. Other advantages besides that of bestowing charity, did afterwards appear con-

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nected with the plan ; the most important was, the prevention *as far as its operation should extend*, of the forming of connections with native Hindoo and Mussulman women. In performing any thing, however trifling, which strikes at the fountain of the torrent of iniquity, it appeared that *so far* important good was done to society. And though I confess the clause in the proposals respecting these connections does admit of a *collateral* interpretation of *another* kind, yet the general reasoning clearly shows that the thing *aimed at* was the encouragement of a *legitimate offspring*. This, I am quite sure, was all I intended ; and grieved I am to find that the least handle should have been given to any other construction. The reflections connected with the existing establishments were meant solely in reference to those institutions, not at all as general remarks universally applicable ; nor were they intended to be brought before the public. In the proposals when published, nothing was intended to appear which could offend the nicest feelings, or be construed by the *remotest interpretation* into an *uncharitable reflection* on others.

‘ When therefore you say ‘ Could you not pursue an object truly noble and bestow your charity on those you deemed most worthy without wounding the feelings of those from whom it is your pleasure to withhold it.’ My answer is,



‘ that I could,—that I ought to have done so,—that it was my full intention to do so.’ But as contrary to all my wishes, that has been made public which was communicated only to a few, it remains for me now to acknowledge my fault, which I do with real sorrow, humbling myself before God and before you. I lament exceedingly that a case which originated in charity and in a sense of duty should have been connected with any thing calculated to give offence to one of the least of Christ’s flock; and I feel (what you in your allusion to that scripture tenderly left out) “ that it were better a mill-stone were hung about my neck and I was cast into the sea, than that I should offend one of the least of these little ones.”

‘ May I not hope that I shall be forgiven by them? Does it not belong to the character of the *little ones* of Christ’s flock to forgive, especially when the intention to give offence is solemnly disclaimed, and unfeigned sorrow is expressed for having occasioned the offence? I might appeal, before you who have known me so long, to my past life, to the whole tenour of my ministerial conduct. I might ask also whether I do not hold in great honour, and esteem, and affection, many of those persons on whom you suppose me to have cast reflection; and whether I am not in habits of close pastoral friendship with them?

Could I *intentionally* wound them whom I regard amongst the chief props of my ministry, and my most valued friends? But I dare not look back on what is past; being fully sensible that the claims of my people on my love and fidelity, have never been discharged as they ought to have been. I see so much that has been defective, so much that has been inconsistent, so much that has been defiled, that I can only acknowledge my transgressions, and cast myself on the tender mercies of my God. Nor dare I promise any thing for the future, for I have no strength to promise, but can only say that I hope with God's gracious assistance, to convince all who are pastorally connected with me, "how greatly I long after them in the bowels of Jesus Christ." Let me intreat you to aid me, not only by your prayers, but by your labours of love. If there be any thing of a corresponding return of affection in you, *this breach must be soon healed*. Allow me therefore, to charge you as you value the ministry of the gospel, as you desire the welfare of immortal souls, and would promote the honour of your God, not to yield to the tempter. He wishes to separate the flock. Be it our care, by all practicable means as much as lieth in us, to keep together, to soften, to alleviate, to rectify, to heal, and in one word to *love*. Oh, let us cover all with the mantle of love; "that love

which suffereth long, and is kind, which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

'Once more, accept of my thanks for your truly Christian letter, and for the opportunity which it has given me of assuring you that I am

Your affectionate friend and minister,

THOMAS THOMASON.'

That days of new and unwonted lustre were about to dawn on India, the least sanguine might anticipate, when in two successive years the Christian youth were seen preparing to receive confirmation from their Bishop, and the Hindoo population of the same age were assembled for instruction in English literature, in an institution originated and maintained by wealthy and learned natives. Such an establishment without having any *direct* bearing on the promotion of Christianity, could not but be ultimately conducive to it; nor was its existence in Calcutta unimportant, proving as it did every hour of its duration, that the fears of worldly-minded alarmists were spectres of their own imagination. Mr. Thomason has furnished an account of this society; which, however, indebted it might have been to one, who had long combated prejudices adverse to its object, and had urged Education incessantly on the consciences of those in authority, "tarried not for

man, nor waited for the sons of men." Its formation was sudden and unexpected; and so solid was it, that when some of its supports were removed violently and prematurely, it still stood erect and unshaken. 'I must enlarge on a subject hastily mentioned in my last letter, the Hindoo College. The great subject of schools for natives has been gradually opening since I returned from my journey with Lord Moira. The subject has not only been discussed by Europeans, but at length gained the attention of the natives. I have been several times applied to by them, and intreated to prepare a plan for a College for the Hindoos. But grown wiser by experience, I have constantly declined moving myself, *referring them to the Chief Justice, as the most efficient promoter of their wishes.* I discovered that government are afraid of chaplains engaging in a work of education. At length some of the principal natives applied to Sir E. East, intreating him to assist them, and requesting his patronage. He consented—called a meeting of the rich natives—formed a Committee—chose secretaries. Sir Edward was desired to be president. Mr. Harrington vice-president. They accepted the offer. In the meantime our timid Governor, apprehensive that the appearance of the Chief Justice and Mr. Harrington at the head of the college, might be construed into an attempt of

Government to convert the natives, signified to Mr. Harrington that he should withdraw. He did so, and Sir Edward East also, to the great surprize and grief of those who had embarked in the work. Notwithstanding this unpropitious circumstance, the matter went on. The plan of the college has been digested after much consultation, and it will be adopted by a general meeting of the Committee. Subscriptions to the amount of 10,000*l.* have been received, and hopes are entertained that more will flow in, when the plan shall be promulgated. The object is precisely that which I described in the plan submitted to Lord Moira: to instruct the natives in the English language, literature, and sciences. It will be divided into two parts, the school and the college; the former preparatory to the latter. The professed object of the college is to open all the treasures of the English language to the inhabitants of India. One hundred pupils only will be admitted at first. Is not all this wonderful! You in England wonder at Buonaparte at St. Helena. We in India at a Hindoo college in Bengal. I do most unfeignedly rejoice in all my disappointment. It was good that Lord Moira declined to act, and that the Government were unwilling to attend to my proposal. The same thing has now been done more unobjectionably. The natives have proposed the thing, they have

entreated the Government to allow them to do of themselves and amongst themselves what I had suggested to be done by Government as a part of its duty. Thus no suspicion can be excited, all is fair and open, even our enemies themselves being judges. Now let this engine begin its work, and may our gracious God command His blessing! So great is the conviction that clergymen should have nothing to do with the college, the bishop's subscription has been for the present declined. The Secretary chosen for the college is a constant hearer of mine, a candid, affectionate friend, admirably suited for managing natives; he will act as superintendant. On the whole, nothing could have happened more favourably. The Europeans look on with contempt or surprize. They who despise the plan are more hostile than the Indians themselves: they who wonder scarcely know how to believe what they hear and see. Even the few who approve are not aware of what is going forward: they have no idea of the magnitude of what they are commencing. For my own part, I feel solemnized with a sense of what God has done, and with the expectation of what He is doing.'

Such was the origin and consummation of a work which will form an epoch in Indian history, inasmuch as on Indian character, it must have powerful and permanent effects. A suggestion

of the possibility of such a project twenty years before, would have been treated as chimerical in the extreme; its achievement in 1816 surpassed the expectations of those who were most ardent in desiring the diffusion of knowledge in the east. The boast of pagan politicians that they *commanded* events, is as directly opposed to experience, as it is to revelation. When was it more clearly seen that man is only a dependant, secondary agent, than in the construction of the Hindoo College? It might seem that Lord Moira had only to wave the sceptre of power, and that such a college would have risen as by magic; but so little did he *dare* to attempt anything of the sort, that he could not divest himself of official trepidation, when it appeared; yet favouring education as he did, the fact could neither be concealed, nor transpire without beneficial result. Mr. Thomason who had been deputed to draw up a plan for the instruction of the people, met with no *immediate* success; yet his preparation of the plan, his persevering advocacy of education, his ventilation of the question through the length and breadth of the land, his advice finally to the natives when they put themselves in motion, could not but be signally influential. Others likewise in different modes and degrees were instrumental towards this design; but blind must he be who does not discern here a superior wis-

dom presiding, without which nothing would have been accomplished.

The literary union of Hindoos in Calcutta led soon to a combination amongst Christians, in which Mr. Thomason, if not a prime mover, was at least an efficient agent. It was termed the School-book Society; its object being to furnish the natives with books proper for elementary instruction. But more direct measures for overthrowing the strong-holds of Heathenism were in action. In the year 1817, the Church Missionary Society gained a firm position, and presented an extended and bold front in Calcutta. Mr. Thomason became its secretary in the commencement of that year; and towards its conclusion, he speaks with animation and joy of Missionary Meetings in his church, and amongst his congregation, in which as a matter of almost necessary consequence, the number of serious hearers multiplied.

*Feb. 24.* We have this account;—‘We have begun our missionary operations in print; for the first time two of our highest civilians shew their faces to the Indian public in connection with a professedly missionary institution. The Lord be praised! The secretaryship has just devolved upon me, and more than employs me; I cannot get through all my work.’ In the month of October of the same



year: ‘ We have established a monthly missionary prayer-meeting at my church. Missionary communications are read, and prayer is offered up for missionary prosperity. Ten years ago, such an event would have thrown the settlement into an uproar.’ Under this accession of duty it was no wonder, especially as his assistant had been removed from him by the Bishop, that he should be more than ever importunate with his Christian friends in England for help. His labours in fact were such as nothing but an unusual increase of work and dearth of workmen would have justified. As a translator, he completed a version of the Psalms into Persian, not knowing probably that the same thing had been done by H. Martyn at Sheraz; he was engaged also in the revision of the Arabic Old Testament; on him also, the printing of the Arabic New Testament, as well as of H. Martyn’s Persian New Testament, devolved. These duties were superadded to his pastoral employments, and almost daily demands were made upon him by the various Committees of religious, charitable, or literary societies; so that he may justly be described as in “labours abundant.” ‘ I am filled with astonishment,’ he says, ‘ at the opening scenes of usefulness,—*send us labourers—send us faithful laborious labourers.* Being obliged to undertake so many departments, renders me sadly inefficient. Preaching, trans-

lating, writing letters, attending committees, all is feebly and unprofitably done.'

The view which the Bishop took of the Church of England Missionaries in India precluded Mr. Thomason, however oppressed, from obtaining relief from their services. Though regularly ordained ministers of the Church of England, they were not permitted to officiate in any of the churches, an inhibition which as the Bishop made it imperative on Mr. Thomason to administer the sacrament to numerous communicants *separately* and *individually*, was peculiarly trying. Some aid he did receive, and with it no small measure of spiritual refreshment, on Mr. Corrie's return to India in the middle of 1817; in Mr. Parson also, who was stately fixed at the Presidency, he had a brother indeed. But long was the period during which he had to sustain a pressure which could not but be attended with ultimate injury to his health, and which no doubt undermined his constitution. The noble and Christian efforts which in the succeeding year 1818, Bishop Middleton made in behalf of India, rendered Mr. Thomason's occupations still more onerous. He could not see his diocesan putting forth his energies for the benefit of millions of heathen, without endeavouring to second them to the utmost, not merely by the cheapest of all modes of co-operation, pecuniary contribution, and by

the most spiritual of all—fervent supplication—but also by vigorous personal exertion. He tasked himself with the acquisition of the Bengalee language, that he might be in a better condition to take part in his Lordship's design of imparting Christian knowledge to an immense population ; and, in compliance with his views, engaged to edit Euclid in Arabic.

‘To the joy of many,’ he writes, ‘our Bishop has come forward in behalf of the heathen. The public was moved—a School Committee formed—a noble fund raised for school purposes ! What could the heart desire more ? We are not straightened for means or for patronage, we want only instruments. As a member of the School Committee, I have felt it my duty to rise to the great occasion, and have laid my shoulders to the work and have for some time past been busily employed in learning the Bengalee language, organizing schools, examining classes, looking out for teachers. The Bishop's chaplain is the only one who takes an ACTIVE part in our Committee. He is in fact the secretary ; but as he always travels with the Bishop, he leaves me to act for him as secretary to the Diocesan Committee ; and thus I have for months together the concerns of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge upon my hands. Now that they have come publicly forward in the cause of the heathen,

I rejoice and feel it an honour to serve them. By throwing in all my little influence, and using all my exertion for them, I am enabled to help forward a mighty instrument of good ; and truly it is a matter of rejoicing that the great and gay amongst us have been forward to give their silver and gold at the call of the Bishop. I am the more particular in detailing this, as my services will be so much in the line of that Society that some persons at a distance might be tempted to think I had deserted the Church Missionary Society. In the prevalence of party spirit, which so unhappily exists, it is very hard to reason with perfect Christian liberality. It is a matter of little consequence who does the good, provided good be done ; and when our own church comes forward, and summons the public to help, it appears to me the call of duty and honour to rally round her. Should we not spring round her to assist with our labour, and prayers, and influence ? My own decided opinion is, that the Church Missionary Society should give up to the Bishop all the schools that he will accept ; his Society would be greatly helped forward by the supply of materials ready manufactured, and the Church Missionary Society would have its funds disposable for *direct* missionary work. But we want men—that precious commodity. The same individuals are too much divided in their attention.



Meanwhile our dissenting brethren are accumulating fast around us. At this moment we have ten dissenting ministers of different kinds constantly labouring in Calcutta—their presses are at work—their legs—their lungs—all are engaged in the great and good cause.’

## CHAPTER XI.

HE who had seen with interest and thankfulness the rise and progress of the Hindoo College, could not but rejoice exceedingly in that splendid project of Bishop Middleton, the institution of a college for missionaries at Calcutta, which was made public in 1819, and which, with an internal administration correspondent to its grand design, will be fraught with benefits to India beyond human calculations. About the time this plan transpired, Mr. Thomason himself began to carry on an arduous and admirable work, of which H. Martyn had laid a foundation—the translation of the *Old Testament into Hindoostanee*. A rough and incomplete manuscript left by H. Martyn, was in Mr. Thomason's possession, who undertook not simply to *revise*—that would not have sufficed—but to *recast* the version, a task to which few could bring a competent stock of oriental learning—fewer still an adequate share of self-denying perseverance. The Arabic and Persian versions which had occupied Mr. Thomason were now off his hands, and he was able to give himself

wholly to the Hindoostance Old Testament; and is it too much to affirm that next to the honour put upon these holy men of old, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and who were the medium of an inspired communication to their fellow creatures—is that of faithfully transferring the words of infallibility into the language of some vast and populous nation, to which the living oracles of God are unknown? Translation it is that openeth the window to let in the light—that breaketh the shell that we may eat the kernel—that putteth aside the curtain that we may look into the most holy place—that removeth the cover of the well, that we may come by the water: we desire, say our translators<sup>1</sup>—that the scripture may speak like itself in the language of Canaan, that it may be understood even by the very vulgar. With sentiments and motives analogous to these, Mr. Thomason entered upon his great undertaking in behalf of the inhabitants of Hindoostan.

At the dawn of the year 1820, a liberal grant from the government of £300. per annum, to the Orphan Asylum, was most cheering to Mr. Thomason. Great was his encouragement also in finding the heart and mind of his valued friend Mr. Simeon in perfect unison with his

<sup>1</sup> See Preface to the Bible.

own in all he had done and was then doing. By him he was thus animated to persist in his course. 'Every work in which you engage is so much to my heart and mind, that my soul appears to be cast into the very same mould with yours. I cannot approve of the egotism of the Christian world—if that disposition savour of zeal, it does not breathe love. Why should we be pleased with nothing but what suits our own taste.' Referring then to Mr. Thomason's *cautious* method of proceeding; he adds in commendation of it—'could not Jehovah have revealed every thing as plainly by Moses, as by the Lord Jesus? Could not our blessed Lord have spoken more intelligibly than by parables, and Paul have gone at once to perfection, instead of dwelling so much on the first principles of the oracles of God? But the object was to give that, which in existing circumstances, was fittest for the recipients. With such examples before us, let us not be grieved, if we be blamed for treading in their steps. The Christian community amongst you, as well as the native population, needed caution and sobriety to be exercised towards them. The concurrence of the Christian world will pave the way for still further exertions, and accelerate your ultimate objects far more than any premature efforts of your own. I trust the time is not far distant, when multitudes of the natives will



“drink water with joy out of the wells of salvation.” The transmission of another child to England this year,—that sacrifice on the altar of affection, which Christian parents in India must make,—inflicted many a pang in the bosoms of Mr. and Mr. Thomason; but never, perhaps, were their bosoms so acutely wounded, never certainly by any event out of the immediate circle of their own relations, as by a disaster in the following year. Ever ready to open his house and heart to the distressed, Mr. Thomason who, not long before, had adopted into his family an orphan child, now received under his roof a widow, whose bereavement was bitter almost beyond former precedent. The narrative he has given can scarcely be read, notwithstanding the interval that has occurred of time and that of space, without an unusual demand upon the reader’s sensibilities. “Captain C—— is with us. Mrs. —— is also arrived; but, alas! the mention of her name is so connected with sorrow and deep affliction, that our hearts are torn with the recollection. She came here a few days ago; her husband had come down the country a few weeks before, and had occupied the same room which is now filled by Captain C——; he proceeded down the river to meet her, and arrived at Saugur, where the ships anchor. A gale springing up, he proceeded to Kedgerie; but before he reached

it, his vessel was upset! He and his friend, Captain —, who accompanied him, have not since been heard of. The last that was seen of them, as related by one of the survivors was, that he was on the hen-coop floating amongst the waves. It blew hard. In the night, it was a hurricane. Two persons only, out of twenty-six, reached the shore. Since that, four others were drifted to the land, at a place near twenty miles from the spot where the accident happened. Two died immediately on landing. They had floated two days and one night, tossed about by the tides. The two survivors relate, that when they last saw the two gentlemen, they were taking off their clothes on the hen-coop. The bad weather that followed, and the days that have since elapsed, leave no hope. Only two days after the catastrophe, the ship with Mrs. — on board, stood into the river from sea. On that very day we heard of the event. Mrs. Thomason determined to go down the river to meet Mrs. —. She arrived here. It was a dreadful scene. I never witnessed such heart-rending agony. It was long before she could weep. We are striving by every tender and affectionate attention, to assist this poor widow in her distress. Never has this settlement been more generally affected, as on this sad occasion. The circumstance of the case came home to every bosom.

A wife anxiously advancing to rejoin her husband—the husband eagerly proceeding to embrace his wife, and in his eagerness, running to his destruction! On Sunday morning I endeavoured to call the attention of the congregation to that great, and universal, and sudden surprise which will take place in the days of the Son of man.—as I above said, was some weeks near me. I had many opportunities of seeing him in private. We all perceived an evident change in him for the better: he took pleasure in good reading, and loved to join in good conversation. The change was attributable under God, to letters received from his own wife whilst in England; she had received much good, and wrote in a strain that was unusual. These letters drew his attention to religious books long-neglected, and he was under considerable religious impression when he came to us. He opened his mind to me—spoke of having too much neglected the most important concerns, and consulted me about his future course; at this juncture the arrival of the wished-for ship was announced. Events of this kind dissipate the thoughts of the most grave—it cannot be a surprise then, that he should have been taken up in engaging a house, getting a boat, and setting off to the ship. Some days before the ship could be expected, he hastened his departure. It was the time of the year when

great caution should have been used, because it was at the breaking up of the Monsoon. He promised he would go no farther than Diamond harbour; but the fineness of the weather tempted him, and he proceeded to the mouth of the river, and we have seen him no more! The recollection of his manifestly altered character has been a source of comfort to us—he was always mild, amiable, diffident, good-tempered—but on this occasion he was serious, and I cannot but entertain a strong hope that the Lord may have been graciously preparing his mind for an event which he himself so little foresaw. Who can tell what passed whilst he was clinging to the hen-coop? It is consoling to know that the Lord is gracious and all-sufficient, and I dwell with real delight on the circumstances of our late intercourse.'

Few deaths can be conceived of a more tenderly affecting character than this, which was followed by two others singularly impressive in the next and the succeeding year—and which, like the former, spoke to all in accents unusually piercing. The one was the decease of the Bishop of Calcutta, the other that of the Chief Justice of Bengal. Of Bishop Middleton, Mr. Thomason remarks—'he lived to do much good—good of a progressive character—the College originated with him, which promises to be of vast importance to India. He

died after an illness of four or five days only. Yesterday week the clergy dined with him—he was cheerful as usual—had just returned to his house after it had undergone a thorough repair, and seemed to bid fair for a long life, being a remarkably athletic man. His disease was fever. He had been greatly injured in many ways—few only knew how to appreciate him. I saw his body after dissection; the doctor could discover no physical cause for his death. It was a humiliating sight—my heart sunk within me. It was an awful spectacle—a flood of light seemed to burst in upon my soul whilst I looked, I pray that the lessons of that scene may not be forgotten. Mrs. Thomason has been all day with Mrs. Middleton to assist and be useful—she goes with equal cheerfulness and serenity to the high and low—her value is known by all.’

The death-bed of Sir Henry Blosset, the Chief Justice, Mr. Thomason attended ministerially; and for the sake of a near relation in England, drew up an account of that most striking scene. The insertion of large extracts from his recital, it would be unpardonable to omit. They teach the Christian parent what may be expected from continuance in prayer; they exhibit the Redeemer as the Prince of life in the very midst of the valley of the shadow of death.

*Calcutta, February 2nd, 1823.*

‘ DEAR MADAM,

‘ It is not without emotions of a very conflicting nature that I am induced to address you. Mr. P——’s more full communication will have apprised you, I trust, of our heavy loss. It is fit that one so well known to you, and so affectionately attached to the deceased, should be the first to open to you the sad tidings, before a stranger ventures into your presence. Having heard from him the sad story, you will be better prepared to receive the consolation, which I would fain strive to administer. Few are privileged, dear Madam, as you are, with such well grounded motives for rejoicing in their affliction. Having been called upon to visit your late respected and beloved brother in his last illness, and having promised before his departure to make known to you the state of his mind, I shall endeavour to recal the particulars of my ministerial attendance upon him.

‘ On Tuesday the 28th of January, I was requested in a letter written by his servant, but in his own name, to attend him whenever it might be convenient. The circumstance of the communication being written by another, convinced me that Sir Henry must be seriously indisposed, I waited upon him immediately, and found him upon his couch, greatly altered in his

appearance. His disorder had attacked him with amazing violence, and was of a nature to pull down the patient speedily. He received me with a solemn and earnest expression of regard and of interest on the occasion of our interview, which I can never forget. It greatly affected my mind. After some preliminary remarks on the suddenness of the attack, and the mysterious nature of his illness; he entered immediately on the great subject of God's dealings with him from the beginning, spoke with much humility and many tears of his past life, and seemed overwhelmed with a sense of the goodness of God to him. Turning round, he observed that his excellent mother having been known to me, I could well appreciate the honour conferred upon him, and the blessing he enjoyed in having such a parent. The remembrance of her piety and maternal love, caused him to weep abundantly. Recovering himself, he said that 'he could not affirm he was not somewhat depressed; it was fit he should be; perhaps there was no state of mind more salutary; it would be well for us if we were oftener in such a state,' and he could from his heart declare, that though he knew much to humble him, and make him sad, yet he felt the mercy of God so greatly to exceed his own demerits, that he could not but feel overwhelmed with a sense of it.

‘He was then led to mention as the greatest blessing, *his voyage to India*. He looked back upon it with peculiar thankfulness. It was what he needed. A voyage by sea was highly calculated to impress the mind with seriousness. He had found this to be a season of solemn recollection, and of *religious enjoyment*. In the retirement of his cabin, he had enjoyed more of God than ever before; and though it was unusually prolonged, he felt sorry when it came to an end. He could bless God for all his afflictions, and could testify that they had been his richest mercies, adding, that he had experienced the fulfilment of that promise in Isaiah xxx. 20, 21, which he repeated with great distinctness and solemnity, from beginning to end. It was very edifying to observe the tone and manner with which he called to mind the words of the promise. “Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the waters of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers, and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it; when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.”

‘The impression upon my mind was, that the voyage was a season of great spiritual improvement to him, during which his heart was strengthened, and his religious principles took deeper



root, and his soul was ripened into that maturity of Christian knowledge and experience, which was so conspicuous in him here.

‘The conversation then turned on the mysteriousness of God’s dealings in bringing him to India, and then laying him on a bed of sickness, which, in all probability, would be the bed of death. He had hoped if it had pleased God to allow him time, to use the influence of his situation in advancing religion, and especially in encouraging the many institutions which had been formed for the benefit of this country ; but the very serious aspect of his sickness had put a stop to all his plans, and had led him to examine his motives strictly, and to feel that he was *nothing*. His anxious desire was now to acknowledge the hand of God, in the exercise of entire patience and resignation to his holy will. After some further conversation on this topic, at his request I prayed with him. having previously read a portion of the twelfth chapter of the Hebrews, referred to in the order for the “visitation of the sick.” He was visibly impressed with a solemn and thankful sense of that passage ; that the Father of spirits chastens us for our *profit*, *that we may be partakers of his holiness*, and added his fervent Amen, that it might be so with him.

‘The above is but an outline of our conversation ; the particulars of which, you who so well

knew him, can easily supply. It is impossible to convey adequately the solemn pathos, the tone of *tenderness*, the dignity and humility with which he spoke.

‘On the following day, Wednesday the 29th, I again visited him. He complained of great pain, and said that his disorder was still a mystery. He did not know how it would terminate, but one thing we know, He “doeth all things well, and in whatever it may end, it *must end well*.” His countenance was illumined with an expression of cheerfulness, when he said this, which plainly showed the inward composure of his mind.

‘The season not being favourable for conversation, I left him, with a promise of renewing my call in the evening.

‘At nine in the evening I found him in bed much reduced and exhausted. He could not converse. It was not desirable that he should. I read the 103d Psalm, making such little remarks as seemed suited to his circumstances, and prayed with him. After prayer, he spoke of receiving the sacrament. It was his particular wish, he said, not to defer it too long. He thought an early time should be fixed. It was an ordinance he much enjoyed, and he should be sorry that it were delayed, for he feared he might be too much weakened by his disease, (which was

rapidly reducing his strength) to enjoy it. Looking at Dr. S., he begged him to fix a time. It was agreed that it might take place on the next or following day. I should have observed that the little he spoke, indicated a very happy frame of mind. On my relating to him an anecdote of a poor afflicted woman in England, who, though long and sorely exercised by various trials, could rejoice in her afflictions, and even expressed her conviction that *in one sense* a state of affliction was preferable to present happiness in heaven, because it was not without its strong present consolations, and was working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, he was much delighted with the story, and said with great emphasis, that it reminded him of a beautiful passage in the life of Mr. Pearce.

‘Singing, as I wade to heaven,  
Sweet affliction : sweet affliction.’<sup>1</sup>

‘On Thursday morning, I again called. He received me with an affectionate welcome, and expressed much thankfulness for being thus assisted in collecting his thoughts, and fixing them on spiritual things, from which he felt himself much drawn aside by his bodily infirmities. I read the 14th of John, and prayed:—

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from a Hymn in a storm, in the *Life of Pearce*.

the words, "that where I am, there ye may be also," appeared to comfort him greatly.

' On the night of Thursday, I found him greatly exhausted. My time with him was very short. I read a few of the first verses of John xv, and prayed. The same remark applies to my visit of Friday morning. The disorder had made fearful ravages on his frame. He suffered much, yet in this his low estate, it was edifying to observe how much he was refreshed by the 130th Psalm, and a few words of prayer. I should observe that in all these visits (after the first) his body was so evidently tried by his complaint, that he was little capable of conversation. My study was to speak so as not to *elicit answers*, to suggest such thoughts as his case required, and pray for a blessing.

' About two o'clock on Friday, I received a message from the doctor that he was sinking fast, and it was desirable the sacrament should be no longer delayed. This ordinance, to which he had looked forward with so much earnestness, was accordingly administered about half-past three. It was a memorable occasion. I pray that all of us who were present may long retain it in our hearts. We ought to consider it a great privilege, that we were permitted to witness such a scene. It was necessary to curtail the service as much as possible. I began with the prayer "we do no pre-

sume to come to this thy table," &c. It would have greatly affected and delighted you, could you have witnessed the fervour, and humility, and holy enjoyment of the ordinance manifested by your honoured brother on this occasion. His frame was greatly emaciated, but his soul seemed to rise superior to all earthly things, and to feed on Christ with faith and thanksgiving, whilst he partook of the elements. In order to shorten the service, which I feared might prove burthensome, I proceeded to the benediction: after the prayer, leaving out the hymn of praise, "Glory be to God on high, &c." He immediately noticed the omission, and interrupted me, pronouncing himself, with great animation, the whole of that beautiful service, as long as his voice would admit.

'We were all greatly affected: I cordially thanked him for noticing the omission, and *with tears of joy we concluded the service together*. It was a season peculiarly impressive. I felt happy in having given occasion to a movement on his part, which so decidedly proved that his mind was entirely collected, and that he entered into the spirit of the ordinance as a solemn act of thanksgiving and worship, an *eucharistical* service to Christ.

'The ordinance being concluded, he requested me to draw the chair close to his couch, and sit

down, at the same time intimating his wish that all others might withdraw.

‘ He then most affectionately put out his hand and intreated me to pray for him that he might be delivered *from all false confidence*, adding, that he felt much peace, but that when he reflected on his past life, he could not but feel a trembling sense of his demerits; that he trusted in the mercy of God through Christ, but that, at *such a season*, and *in a matter of such importance*, he felt it necessary to pray *against false confidences*. *He repeated this expression with great earnestness*. I replied that God would not disappoint the hope which is founded on the merits of his Son, and that the Scripture was peculiarly adapted to convey comfort to all, who, under a trembling sense of their sinfulness, cast themselves on the mercy of God. He said, ‘ That is true, I am perfectly satisfied on that point. My views are strong and clear. I have no cloud, or doubt, and long to be with my God and Saviour. O when will the time come? To this time I have looked forward, O God, thou knowest. It does not take me by surprize: I have been preparing for it. For some years past I have been endeavouring to withdraw from the world; avoiding as much as possible all new connections, and labouring to be ready for my summons. I greatly long for my rest.’ Here he dwelt with great delight on the

blessedness of being with God, varying and reiterating his expressions, sometimes in broken accents, at others more distinctly. I observed that he was now in a state to appreciate those beautiful lines of C. Wesley, written when he supposed himself dying. 'What are the lines?' he said, 'repeat them.' I began,

In age and feebleness extreme,  
Who shall a sinful worm redeem?

and was then proceeding to the line,

O let me catch one glimpse from thee ;

but here he took me up, and with great fervour himself repeated two important lines which I had missed.

Jesus, my joy and strength thou art :  
The comfort of my drooping heart.  
O let me catch one smile from thee,  
Then drop into Eternity.

He was refreshed by these lines, and entered with great delight on another hymn,

Jesus, lover of my soul, &c. &c.

We repeated three verses together, and every now and then he helped my memory, till we came to the end, in which he joined with great emphasis of tone and manner,

Spring thou up within my heart—rise to all Eternity.

'Here I expressed my thankfulness to God for the support vouchsafed to him at so trying a

time ; and observed that it was a new instance of the Lord's tender mercy, in that when he most needed comfort, his consolation should be so strong, adverting at the same time to my first interview, when he was comparatively depressed. He said it was indeed a merciful dispensation, but that violent disorders naturally deaden the expressions of one's feelings. He had abundant reason to bless God for all his dealings. ' Yes,' I said, ' he has not dealt with us according to our deserts,' ' Not according to my deserts'—he emphatically said, ' I am sure ; you know not how I have sinned against him. But I can see mercy,' he continued, after a pause, ' in all the way by which I have been led, and a gracious reason for every trial with which he has visited me. All is wonderful, *surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of God for ever.*' These last words he uttered with uplifted hands, and great fervour of tone. The scene was grand ! I observed that the sorrow and regret of the occasion was absorbed, and I could only rejoice in the comfort he felt at such a trying season. The hearts of many, I said, would be confirmed by the account, especially of his friends at home, to whom I should make a point of communicating what I had witnessed. He then spoke, dear madam, with great tenderness of *you*. ' He had one



beloved sister,' he said, 'who would be comforted to hear about him.' I promised to write, and asked, what shall I say to her? Have you any thing to communicate in particular? He said, 'Nothing; but tell her this, that I DIE HAPPY.' He spoke here with peculiar *deliberation*, and then added, 'What can you say more?' After a pause he said again, '*Tell her to follow after and find me out.*' As nearly as I can recollect his words, this was his message, delivered in a sententious style, and cheerful tone of voice, like one who knows where he has built his hopes, and the ground on which he stands. He spoke much on the delight of meeting you in heaven, and his beloved mother, but here his disorder became very troublesome. 'I can bear no more,' he said, and most affectionately seized my hand and kissed it. I too bid him a tender adieu, kissing his forehead and cheek.

'It was grievous to part with him! But blessed be God, we sorrow not as those without hope. Having committed him with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow to God, I withdrew, observing that death was not only deprived of its sting—it *was swallowed up in victory.*

'About ten minutes after, Mr. — went to him, and he heard him say, 'Blessed be God—I have peace with God through Jesus Christ.'

'Dearest madam, I feel for your loss. The

tender affection with which your brother spoke of you and your family, has drawn my heart towards you in sympathy. Yet I am sure, you will rejoice in the consolation, and I trust you will be encouraged to go forward, in hope of the same victory. The grace given to your honoured brother is also offered to *you*, to *me*. O that we may not fall short of it! Such bereavements are irreparable in this world. But Christ is all-sufficient; “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” May he be the strength of our heart, and our portion for ever!

‘Yours, my dear madam, in much sympathy and Christian condolence,

THOMAS THOMASON.’

An Extract from a letter to the Rev. Mr. Thomason from Sir H. Blossett’s Medical Attendant.

‘MY DEAR SIR,

‘As you had many personal interviews with our late respected friend, I did not think that any thing which came under my observation could add much to your satisfaction. I shall however, as you requested, now mention such things as were talked of in your absence.

‘On the Thursday morning he mentioned to you that he looked to have some portion of Scrip-

ture read occasionally : I therefore in the course of the day offered to read any portion that he wished. He immediately mentioned in succession the 27th and 29th Psalms, and the 4th and 5th chapters of St. Paul's first epistle to the Thessalonians, repeating always the beginning of the first verses ; which being read, he repeated these words frequently, " Comfort your heart with these things," and addressing Messrs. — and myself, began to speak of the advantages of a religious life. He observed that there was no need for shew or eccentricity, but a sincere regard to the ordinances of God, especially the attentive perusal of the Scriptures, with prayer to God for his blessing, and the supply of our wants,—that it was only by setting God ever before us, that we could expect success in this life, and enjoy that peace and consolation which the world knows not of. He said more to this effect, but the above is the substance of what he did say, and nearly in his own words.

‘ On expressing my conviction that he could with David, say, “ Yet hath he made with me an everlasting covenant, well-ordered in all things, and sure: ” He said “ this is all my salvation, and all my desire.”

‘ During the whole of Saturday, he seemed very anxious to know when I thought he should depart. And once after, inquiring very particu-

larly, and mentioning the state of his feelings, I gave him my opinion, when he said, ‘ a few hours then will now free me from trouble ; and I hope Mr. S. that you will never withhold the light of divine truth from any of your patients. It is the only source of comfort in life and in death. What could I have done without this support ? And what the condition of those who live without God and have no hope in their death ! In prosperity I have been too regardless of my eternal concerns : but blessed be God for bringing me to this state.’

‘ Soon after this he prayed for all his relations, and those who were about him, for you and for M. — and for all Christians, and for the conversion of the heathen, especially those of this land. About two hours before his death, inquiring about the state of his pulse, I told him that it was almost imperceptible. ‘ *It will soon then beat,*’ said he, ‘ *in the blood of the everlasting covenant.*’

It was not long after the death of the Chief Justice that Mr. Thomason, for the first and last time in his life, found himself involved most reluctantly in public controversy. A ‘ collatio signorum ’ occurred unhappily between the Committee of the Church Missionary Society and one or two members of the Christian Knowledge Society. To revive the topics in dispute would be as unchristian as it would be uninteresting.

Suffice it to say, that it was well for both sides that to Mr. Thomason the vindication of the proceedings of the Church Missionary Society was committed : his pen was singularly free from gall, and the hand that directed it was not feeble.

In the midst of these conflicting discussions Bishop Heber arrived to restore harmony and to diffuse happiness. Never perhaps was any ecclesiastical ruler more acceptable than he—men of all grades in society and of every diversity of sentiment gladly recognized his superintendence. To an endeared Christian friend,<sup>1</sup> whose absence from India to Mr. Thomason personally was such a chasm as scarcely any thing could close, he had written on this subject—‘ I am full of joy at the prospect of seeing him.’ To Mr. Simeon—‘ I was much gratified and many were made happy by your account. May he come to us in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ ! We pray for him : and we pray for ourselves that we may receive him in a right spirit. May he see nothing in us to damp and discourage him, but every thing by which his hands may be strengthened and his heart comforted !’ When the Bishop actually arrived on Indian ground, his words are—‘ We have heard his voice, and know his mind, and are full of thankfulness.’

<sup>1</sup> J. W. Sherer, Esq.

Bishop Heber's appointment of Mr. Corrie to the Archdeaconry, to which another had nearly been elevated, (the step would have been complete but for the firm, respectful, and seasonable remonstrance of Mr. Parson,) was gratifying in the highest degree to all who prized the golden doctrines of the reformation, and to none more than to Mr. Thomason, who himself shortly after received a substantial proof of the Bishop's favourable regard and good will, in an advancement to the cathedral. Concerning Mr. Thomason, at that moment the Bishop writing to one of his most intimate and valued friends in England,<sup>1</sup> expresses himself thus—'Your friend Thomason is a very good and a very learned man—a child in gentleness and facility of disposition—the most unsuspicious being possible—inclined to think well of every body—he is an excellent preacher;' adding concerning his removal to the cathedral, 'Mr. Thomason is a most useful and necessary accession to the cathedral. I do not see any symptoms of the dispersion of his flock—though many doubtless follow him to the cathedral. The congregation of the old church, which was first formed by Mr. Brown, is still spoken of by many persons in Calcutta as made up of *'the evangelical party.'* A few years ago there was an avowed

<sup>1</sup> J. Thornton, Esq.

and impenetrable boundary line between them and the frequenters of the cathedral. The preacher of the old church was hardly acknowledged as a member of the same community. His brother chaplains, and those who attended his ministry, would as soon have gone to mass as to St. John's. The amiable temper and moderation of Thomason—the excellent terms on which he latterly was with Bishop Middleton—the similarity of his opinions with those of the late senior chaplains, have for some time back brought the parties nearer to each other. To the affairs of the Church Missionary Society, I have paid considerable attention, *and have great reason to be satisfied with the manner in which they are conducted, as well as personally with the Committee, and all the missionaries whom I have seen.*

‘I believe the bishop and the government,’ Mr. Thomason wrote whilst his designation to the Cathedral was in suspense, ‘will conclude, in considering my church as a separate exclusive church, and call *my junior* to the cathedral. If this should be the case, it is my determination to acquiesce in the decision, as the appointment of providence, and to make no movement in the way of appeal or complaint.’ Doubly gratifying was advancement *thus* received. On many accounts the decision was pleasant; a station in the cathedral produced closer contact with the

Bishop, it opened also a more extensive intercourse with the lower classes, affording employment more distinctly *parochial* than before.

‘Two months have elapsed,’ he writes, March 1824, ‘since I have been fixed in the cathedral, and I am thankful to give a good report of the event, as far as I can yet judge. The change has been in some respects great, in others scarcely perceptible. We live in the same house, and amongst the same people. I am still in the pulpit of the old church once a week, and when I am not there, it is occupied by one who feeds them with the bread of life. In the meantime I am myself engaged in a new sphere on the Sundays; at the Cathedral I have a very different congregation to deal with, and may I have reason to speak as I ought to speak. I have much additional work in attending to the poor, and looking after our free school, with all the occasional duties of this city. It is a large field of parochial labour. My daily prayer is for grace to follow up these duties with a truly pastoral heart. My avocations oblige me to be more with men, hearing their troubles, and bearing with their perverseness, and I feel the want of what is called pastoral theology. One of our Lutheran Missionaries tells me this makes a prominent part of their education for the ministry.’ From the strain of these remarks, it might



be imagined Mr. Thomason was standing on the threshold of his ministerial vocation, instead of being as he was, eminently versed in pastoral theology, apt to teach both publicly and from house to house; but real humility has a high standard and exalted motives, and is ever ready to consider the measure of actual accomplishment low and disproportionate. No one was in less peril, than himself of being drawn aside by any consideration from the sacred and appropriate offices of a Christian minister.

'The autumn of this year was remarkable for an epidemic of a singular character; it raged in Calcutta, and Mr. Thomason was one of those who were laid low by the complaint. 'The fever,' he says, 'scarcely lasted thirty-six hours, but the prostration of strength was great, and the pains in the limbs harassing. You may judge of the general distress,' he wrote, 'when you hear that whole families were prostrate at once: parents, children, servants, so that in many instances, there was no one to administer food and medicine, and hired servants were obtained by the day, as they could be found. What added to the calamity, was, that the medical men were laid low. One physician had the business of three or four. The dispensers of medicine at the Company's store-house were affected one after another, until the dispensary was shut up for

want of persons to make up the prescriptions, and we were sent to other places for medicine where we could find it. The throng of servants was such at the dispensaries, that we could not obtain any medicine until after two, three, or four hours attendance, the people within being unable to make them up with sufficient expedition. About one in twenty or thirty only have escaped sickness. It seems to have rendered the place more salubrious, for last week when it was my turn to attend at the burying ground, I had scarcely one funeral, which, in this most sickly month of the year, is unprecedented.'

When Mr. Thomason left England for India, he did so in a spirit of prayer and deliberate self-denial: it was his fixed intention that the step should be *final*, and notwithstanding those thoughts which often would force themselves across the expanse of ocean, 'surmounting the nightly wave,' especially when beloved friends had their faces turned towards the spot where an aged, honoured, and endeared mother was living, he would have persisted, in the resolution of remaining in India, if, in the year 1825 it had not been too apparent that Mrs. Thomason's health was gradually declining, and that the only human hope of her restoration, was to be found in exchanging a climate, where the air without is often like a blast furnace, whilst that within

imparts a sepulchral sensation, for the breezes of the sea, and the invigorating atmosphere of her native land. In the month of June therefore, 1825, he determined on *her account solely*, to return to England, and in the month of October his passage homeward was engaged. Precarious however as was the state of Mrs. Thomason's health; it would scarcely have been deemed by him a reason sufficient to justify the desertion of his post, had he not found in Mr. Good, who arrived from England, one on whom he could with entire satisfaction devolve his official cares and labours: concerning this valuable and opportune supply, and in reference to his conflicting feelings at this most anxious juncture, his expressions of gratitude and dependence on his God, were as usual, those of a Christian of elevated attainments.

‘Mr. Good has been a week with us, he brought many letters, and could tell us of what he *saw*; he has delighted us; we cannot be too thankful for such a treasure, and receive him as a gift from God, for the promotion of his work in this place. His arrival here has removed all remaining troubles concerning the old church. My mind is now entirely at rest on that subject. I see and admire the over-ruling hand of providence, and can now leave India without a pang. The ministry at the Cathedral however appears

more and more important, and my translation work is greatly in arrears; I fear it will not be in my power to finish the translations of the Hindostanee Old Testament, by the end of the year. I know not how to leave so important a work undone. Mr. Good opened his commission at the Cathedral, in a faithful discourse from “We preach Christ crucified.” Mr. N——, one of our most zealous friends, wrote me the following note. ‘I think I may say from my heart, “a day in thy courts is better than a thousand.” Let me congratulate you myself, and this community. You may tell Mr. Simeon that there was one of your congregation to-day also felt a degree of gratitude and thankfulness towards him for his gift, and to God who prompted him to give, that is hardly communicable: considering the number of pious and able ministers lately arrived, and coming to India, principally through his instrumentality, the prospect is brightening indeed.’

Mr. Thomason’s relation to those amongst whom he had so long laboured in Calcutta, spiritual and primitive as it was, could not but be affectionate in a degree inconceivable to those who are wedded to a vain world, and attached to mere forms: in parting for a *limited* period, their sorrow was unfeigned and mutual, when therefore a separation of an *unlimited* extent was near and unavoidable, their grief was commensurate. His

approaching departure gave birth to the following reciprocal communications of respect, attachment, and regret. Happy those who “know them that are over them in the Lord, and admonish them, and who esteem them very highly in love for their works’ sake,” happy above all, those who are thus esteemed.

To the Rev. Thomas Thomason—from some of the members of the congregation at the Old Church, Calcutta.

‘ REVEREND AND BELOVED SIR,

‘ On the occasion of your approaching departure from India, after a sojourn of more than seventeen years; we, the congregation of the *Old Church*, the chief field of your important labours for fifteen years of that period, cannot suffer such an event to pass by in silence. We should do violence to our feelings, were we to suppress the expression of our sincere and heartfelt regret at the necessity under which you are called to leave us. Most of us can associate in our memories, recollections of the saving proofs of your ministrations. Now, reverend and beloved Sir, as we are not to hear your voice again, (we hope for a season only, but some of us, perhaps, never here below,) it behoves us as members of a church, when we have profited by your

labour of love, to make known to you our grateful acknowledgments, for the spiritual light and knowledge we have derived from your preaching to us the blessed truths of the gospel; for, should we your congregation refuse to speak, the very stones of the Old Church would cry out of the walls, and the beam out of the timber would answer it. From your very first discourse preached at the Old Church, “knowing the terrors of the Lord,” you have persuaded us. As an ambassador of Christ, you have besought, you earnestly besought us to be reconciled to God, and to flee from the wrath to come: you have pointed out to us the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world; and praised be our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whose sole glory you have had in view under your labours, many who have been moved from the church militant here on earth, have, before they fell asleep in Jesus, afforded abundant proofs that they had been prepared to join the church triumphant above! Your series of discourses on the 11th of Hebrews; on the Gospel of St. John and St. Matthew: on the Historical portions of the Old Testament; on the Parables; on the Commandments; on the Liturgy; on part of the Revelations, on Conscience; and latterly on the Psalms, are all well remembered by us. Many of your powerful discourses are fresh in our memories, and we

trust, indelibly engraven on our hearts. We cannot forbear noticing a few of your most impressive and heart-searching addresses from the Old Church pulpit, the one delivered from the text, "Be sure your sins will find you out." Another on the excuses for not coming to the marriage supper. A third on the text, "He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." A fourth on the fall of our first parents. A fifth on the call of God to Abraham to sacrifice his only son Isaac—with many others. Indeed the time would fail us, if we were to recount many of your appeals to our hearts and consciences, which, in a manner still reverberate in our ears. We shall in this place advert more particularly to one of your affectionate addresses to the Old Church congregation, delivered on New Year's Day, 1816, as being quite suitable to our present purpose, and to the avowed object of this address. The text was taken from the 4th chapter of Amos, and the 12th verse, "Prepare to meet thy God." You said, "My dear brethren, we have often met together in this house: the years roll round, and life sinks apace; our connexion together as minister and people has subsisted now more than seven years; I feel my own heart deeply impressed with the importance of the relation which unites us, and hope you will bear

with me in saying this, on an occasion when, by the providence of God, we are assembled to consider how we may best improve the year which this day opens upon us. Can we better improve it, than by carrying our thoughts forward to that great day when we shall meet together at the bar of judgment, when minister and people shall meet their God? The thought of this meeting, which we are quite sure must take place, ought to lead us all to inquire into the preparation we have made for it. I say, we are quite sure of it, we cannot get rid of the thought if we would. Every day hastens forward that solemn event. It will be a meeting without any disguise on either side—a meeting in which we shall be perfectly known to God and to each other—a meeting in which every soul will be deeply interested, and unless we are prepared for it, it will be a meeting of unutterable anguish. Two questions I would propose for present consideration; First, with what feelings shall we meet each other on that day? Secondly, with what feelings shall we meet God? Again, ‘Many a precious hour of our lives has been spent in this place; many a precious passage has been brought before us out of the word of God: promises, warnings, exhortations, threatenings, precepts, exhortations, have been the subject of our meditations. Some of your ministers, dear and



honoured servants of God, have been removed by death: others have laboured amongst you, and are now absent at their respective posts. Inroads have been made in the congregation by death, and now we who are spared to consider the lapse of years, should consider ourselves called upon to serious self-examination, and faithful dealing with ourselves.

“Are there not many who must testify, if they would speak the truth, that they have received no profit. As ignorant of divine things, as much strangers to the power, as much in bondage to sin and the world as they were. Surely, *your* meeting with your ministers must be a painful one. They will be a swift witness against you in that day, if you die in your present condition. Are there not others who have declined from the ways of God, who neither have the comfort they once enjoyed, nor do they manifest the same fruitfulness. I am sure there is a marked difference in their attendance at the house of God. They used to attend both on Sundays and week days. Now they only come on Sundays, and very often but once on that blessed day.”

‘Such are the faithful appeals to hearers which touch their hearts, and lead them to self-examination, humiliation, and contrition. Those who have had ears to hear, have heard your well-known voice. Surely, how beautiful upon a

benighted land are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation !

‘ On your first arrival amongst us, you commenced a round of pastoral visits to the families of many of the Old Church congregation. These parochial visits led to the adoption of social worship amongst families where such a practice had not been observed before, whilst they added fresh fervour and earnestness amongst those with whom family worship had been already established. And we have heard that your *first* visit of this kind to one of your Old Church congregation and his family,—on an occasion when you selected for the meditation of the evening the fourth chapter of St. John’s gospel, wherein is recorded the story of the woman of Samaria coming to Jacob’s well, to draw water, and the conference she had with our Saviour, has been remembered with thankfulness in that family to this day.

‘ We cannot omit noticing another branch of your early labours on your first arrival in Calcutta. We allude to your catechetical lectures to the younger part of your flock, on a Saturday evening. Numbers of your juvenile disciples (most of whom have now grown to years of discretion) have profited by your instructions to them, and through Divine grace the good seed sown has not been unproductive, but brought forth fruit

unto repentance and to a godly life ; some an hundred fold, some sixty, and some thirty. You have been a foster-father to them, and they duly appreciate your tender solicitude towards their spiritual welfare and eternal interests.

‘ And now, beloved and dear sir, we bid you an affectionate farewell ! A farewell which is poignantly felt in the very inmost recesses of our hearts. In the year 1808 you came to us, and now in the year 1826, you are about to depart from us ! May he who “ manages the seas ” conduct the *Thomas Grenville* with safety to her destined haven, and may yourself and your dear wife, who has verily been a *Dorcas* amongst us, full of good works and alms deeds which she had done, be conveyed speedily into the bosom of your revered mother, and all near and dear to you in your native land. Should you again come back to us (which God grant that you may) how many will you not miss ! Many who have walked with you in the house of God and taken sweet counsel together, will have gone before to the heavenly Jerusalem, where ministers and people will one day all surround the throne of Him that sitteth upon the throne and of the Lamb for ever. Should it be otherwise, we intreat your prayers for us, that “ our conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, that whether you come and see us or else be absent, you may hear of our

affairs, that we stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together in the faith of the gospel."

' Since we may not see you face to face again, it would be a satisfaction to us to behold your likeness, and we intreat you therefore, to sit for your portrait at any time and at any place most convenient to yourself. Once more, dear and beloved sir, farewell! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.'

To this valedictory address, which, though ardent in language was insufficient to convey the grateful emotions of those whose names were affixed to it, Mr. Thomason, writing from the vessel, which was carrying him to the mouth of the Hooghly, returned this answer :

' BELOVED BRETHREN,

' I am at a loss adequately to express my feelings on the perusal of your affectionate address. It has in a manner brought before me the whole period which has elapsed since I entered on my charge at the Old Church, and excited recollections of occasions wherein our hearts have been mutually engaged in sweet counsel, in Christian fellowship, and in public worship ; occasions most important to us all, and hereafter to be accounted for! The retrospect is to me a subject of deep humiliation. For though I can truly say that it

has been felt a great privilege to have been permitted to minister unto you so long, it is my grief that my ministry has not been more faithful and edifying, and that it has been in many respects lamentably defective; so that on a review of the past, I do most deeply feel my need of forgiveness, and can only find relief by casting myself on the boundless mercy of God, even the unsearchable riches of his grace in and through Jesus Christ.

‘ Yet the retrospect is also a subject of heartfelt thankfulness to God, arising out of the hope that the ministry has not been *wholly unprofitable*. My spirit has been greatly refreshed in witnessing your serious attention to the word preached, and the practical fruits which have from time to time appeared in the congregation. It is a great comfort to have to do with a willing, attentive, and affectionate people; I have enjoyed that comfort long; and the pang of separation from you is *deep*. But how is the separation alleviated by the consideration that my poor labours are still remembered by you with thankfulness to God, in reference to the solid practical results adverted to in your address; in your mentioning these results, and in the Christian sentiments with which they have been accompanied, I recognize fruits which cannot but comfort the heart of a Christian minister. To God be ascribed the glory of all the good which

may have been received! He is pleased to use the weakest instruments for the accomplishment of his gracious purposes, that so the excellency of the power may appear to be of God, and not of man.

‘Another consideration greatly comforts me at this time, arising from the character of the ministry with which you are now blessed. It is an unspeakable consolation to know that you possess ministers who abound in the work of the Lord. I leave you under the care of pastors who feed you with knowledge, and who carry on all those public and private labours by which churches are at once edified, adorned, and enlarged. May they be long continued to you, and see much fruit of their ministry; and may the Lord grant you a succession of such ministers, and pour out his Holy Spirit to give efficacy to the word.

‘I have been reminded by yourselves, in a most touching manner, of the fittest subject for our mutual consideration on the present occasion; and would now, at parting, reiterate the exhortation to you and myself, “Prepare to meet thy God.” These separations on earth should forcibly draw our attention to the great day when we shall meet around the throne of God. Pray, I beseech you, *for me*, that in the retirement of the ship, this may be my daily work, as *I* hope to pray for *you*. The removals which take place here, are comparatively

of little moment. Are we seriously preparing for the *great removal*, when we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ? Have we *personally* and *individually* taken refuge in *him*, by *heartly repentance, and true faith*? O let us follow up *this* inquiry, remembering that he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him! God grant that we may be found of him in peace, and may the very God of peace sanctify us wholly; and may our whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

‘I have only to add, that the kind request conveyed at the end of your letter has been already anticipated, through the friendship of Mr. Harrington, to whom I refer you. And now, beloved brethren, farewell, the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, *that great Shepherd* of the Sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. So prays your most affectionate minister and friend,

THOMAS THOMASON.’

‘On board the *Pilot Schooner*,  
20th Feb. 1826.’

In addition to these animating and affecting testimonies of love, others of a description by no means usual, did honour to the subject of this memoir, on quitting the scene of his devoted ministry.

‘The encomiums which your Lordship has so justly passed,’ the Governor General in council wrote to the Bishop, ‘on Mr. Thomason’s exemplary discharge of his ministerial functions, and his active and beneficent attention to most of the useful and charitable institutions of this city, meet with the most ready and entire concurrence of the Governor General in Council. Mr. Thomason’s services in the cause of religious charity and general usefulness have been so extensively beneficial, that the regret of the government for his departure from India will be shared by every member of the community who has witnessed his indefatigable exertions amongst all classes of persons within the sphere of his influence and example.’



## CHAPTER XII.

MR. THOMASON'S hope of conveying his beloved wife to England, and beholding her languid eye again lighted up with health, for a time increased—but it soon vanished, or rather was exchanged for that hope—the vitality of which is apparent in death. The clouds of sorrow which then descended on him, were dark in the extreme; but gleams of light, visible to the eye of faith, parted them asunder.

On Easter-day, 1826, with the keenest anguish, yet not without the most animating confidence, he imparted to his son in India the afflicting intelligence that on earth he would see his mother's face no more.

*Easter-day, March 26, 1826.*

‘ I feel it right to lose no time in communicating to you the sad intelligence of our common loss. It has pleased God, whose ways are unsearchable, to defeat our sanguine hopes. He has taken to himself your most beloved parent.

Assured as I am that it is simply solidly true that she is with Christ, it is yet with anguish of heart that I record our irreparable bereavement. O that I might have been spared the pain of this afflicting communication. But it is the will of God, and I desire to submit with resignation to the disposal of infinite wisdom. About midnight on Good Friday, she was seized with the agonies of dissolution, which were greatly protracted; she did not breathe her last till near ten o'clock the following morning. About ten minutes before ten on Saturday morning, her spirit took its flight. O the unutterable anguish of this sad—sad scene; sad to us—but she has joined the innumerable company of glorified spirits and angels—she died in the Lord. Three days before her death she expressed to me a strong hope that God would raise her up to be a comfort to her husband and children; “but what if it should please him to dispose otherwise,” I said; ‘then,’ said she ‘his will be done!’ She added expressions of dependance on her Saviour, but complained that her heart was dull and sluggish. Conversation was highly injurious, I could only read with her at intervals, with a few words of prayer. To a question whether the Saviour comforted her, she said, ‘he does.’ Her countenance indicated that she was much exercised in prayer. On Saturday evening her precious remains were committed to

the deep. The evening was still, and all was solemn; the service was read by dear S——, whose brotherly tenderness and sympathy I cannot adequately describe. Being myself overwhelmed by the bereavement, I was unable to perform that last service; but I saw from a distance the coffin dropped into the sea, and heard the words, ‘We commit her body to the deep, to be turned into corruption, looking for the resurrection of the body (when the sea shall give up her dead) and the life of the world to come through our Lord Jesus Christ, who at his coming shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.’ O my beloved boy, I cannot tell you the consolation afforded by that hope. I earnestly trust it will be as a healing balm to your own heart. I felt comfort in the thought that the whole Christian world were celebrating the death and resurrection of Christ. She was committed to the deep on Easter even, when we commemorate the Saviour’s lying in the grave, thus consecrating it as the place of repose for his faithful followers, previous to the great and joyful day of resurrection. I must not forget one circumstance that made an indelible impression upon my heart. Before she took to her bed, your beloved mother sat and read a few hymns. She came at last to the hymn,

O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come.  
Our shelter from the stormy blast  
And our eternal home.

and never can I forget the sweet affectionate tone of her voice. She was deeply affected. In reading the second verse her voice faltered ; however she continued to get through, till she came to the verse

In every scene of life and death,  
Thy promise is our trust,  
And this shall be our children's song,  
When we are cold in dust.

In reading these last lines she was quite overpowered. God grant this hope may be realized ! my heart springs toward you all with a new tenderness. I can only in deep anguish commit you to God, who I trust will provide for you all needful good. If you seek him, he will be found of you—if you forsake him, he will cast you off for ever ; seek him earnestly then ; read your Bible more, I beseech you, with prayer for divine teaching. This will consecrate all your other labours, and will be a fruitful source of happiness to you here and hereafter.'

In losing her of whose death he could write with a mind perturbed with grief, yet calm with resignation, he lost one eminent for meekness, lowliness, spirituality, and love, who had indeed

been ‘ a Dorcas in good works.’ The Orphan Institution (the fact is narrated by a friend<sup>1</sup> who knew its truth) was the peculiar charge of Mrs. Thomason, the favourite object of her maternal solicitude; nor has it ever fallen to my lot to visit, either in my own, or in any foreign country, a similar establishment where arrangements and internal œconomy appeared so perfect in reference to the spiritual or temporal interests of its inmates.’

Sometime after its formation, the mistress was removed, and an epidemic attacked several of the children. Mrs. Thomason, unwilling to trust the orphans to native management, left the comforts of her home, and acted for some weeks as the sole guardian, nurse, and mother, of these poor children.’—Of an affectionate, lovely spirit herself, ‘ she naturally cared ’ for the present and endless welfare of destitute children, and amongst such was she gladly found—seeking with the tenderest assiduity to repair as far as possible, the most desolating of all privations.

Well might her husband rise up and call her blessed when in the midst of his family and household: well might he possess an assurance without a cloud that whilst the deep closed round about her lifeless body, her spirit through the

<sup>1</sup> C. B. Elliot, Esq.

might and merit of Jesus was walking in its uprightness above the skies.

Mr. Thomason's return to England like many events that occur in life—was varied by the strongest lights and shades. To his great joy he found a mother ; but he had lost a wife, to his indescribable anguish. ‘ Oh ! it has been a trying dispensation,’ he said, ‘ far beyond what I could have expected, whilst I only knew the sorrow from report. She entered into rest—I was left in a state of desolation no language can express. O may I ever remember the impressions and emotions, the tears and prayers, the sorrows, and joys, and mercies, and judgments of the voyage.’

After visiting Cambridge and *Scaleby Castle* in the autumn of 1826, places where memory was acutely active, Mr. Thomason, when the year was on the wane, bent himself again to his ministerial services, in the town of Cheltenham, a sphere of no common extent and importance. There he gave himself continually to prayer and the ministry of the word ; and remembering, as in India, a maxim taking its date from the days of Jerome, ‘ that a minister easily subjects himself to contempt who never refuses invitations to dinner however frequent,’ adopting the other extreme, he determined to live in perfect retirement, except when professional duty called him forth. His ministry in that place received the dew of that

blessing he implored in prayer. Of this the following communication from a member of Queen's College, Cambridge, furnishes *one* interesting evidence.

‘ When passing by one of the night coaches from Cheltenham to London, my fellow traveller was a gentleman with two children in deep mourning. They were returning to their home in a remote part of France which they had left just five weeks before. We soon found that though entire strangers, there was a common ground on which we could meet as old friends. He told me that he and his wife had passed their lives in entire ignorance of the gospel, and of the reality of religion. Circumstances, apparently fortuitous, had brought them on a visit to Cheltenham, and they had happened to hear Mr. Thomason preach. His sermon powerfully arrested their attention. A day or two after, his wife caught a cold, sickened, and in three weeks died. In her illness she sent for Mr. Thomason. The gospel was new to them, and they seemed to have received it with the simplicity of little children. The dying woman was convinced from Mr. Thomason's unwearied assiduous earnestness in visiting, and his whole manner so beaming with love, that there must be reality in *his* religion—and she died peacefully resting on her Saviour's bosom. Her husband was returning “on his way rejoicing,” even to his

desolate home, blessing God for providing a message of mercy for them, and for having drawn them so many hundred miles to hear it.'

During his abode at Cheltenham Mr. Thomason describes his paternal feelings as called into delightful exercise by the sight of all his children around him, his son from India having joined him. He speaks also of being much moved at receiving at the altar on one occasion many whose names were on his heart before he left England, or had been engraven there when absent from his country in a remote land.

At Cheltenham, as in India, the cause of the heathen engaged his affections and energies. Besides attending meetings of his clerical brethren, and collecting communicants for instruction before the administering of the sacrament, he held monthly assemblies also, in aid of the Church Missionary Society. Nor was the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel forgotten. At the Bishop of Lichfield's desire, he was a successful advocate in its behalf at Eccleshall. In addition to which exertions he accompanied his valued friend and brother Dr. Steinkopff into the West of England in support of the British and Foreign Bible Society; esteeming it an especial favour to plead in behalf of that noble institution at Plymouth, where he first drew his breath.

In the beginning of the year 1828, Mr.



Thomason was involved in severe internal conflict. At Cheltenham the field was large, and the seed was scattered widely, with hope of much increase ; but how few labourers were there amongst the heathen ! and how could the version of the Hindoostanee Old Testament be perfected in England ? Such thoughts arose, and after many a struggle with himself he arrived, as he imagined, at a decision, and wrote to communicate it to his mother ; but on taking his letter to the post, (let the relation sink him in the reader's estimation *if it be possible*,) his resolution he confesses wholly forsook him. At length he was reconciled to the sacrifice, ' after waverings and decisions, decisions and waverings,' he wrote, ' I am reconciled to go back to India. After a sore conflict I have offered myself for the post.' To replace him however in his former situation was unprecedented, and but for his high character the situation could not have been obtained. ' It was not without difficulty I prevailed, (they are the words of the Chairman of the East India Company,) the objections were founded on *general* principles. It must be gratifying to you to learn what I have the greatest pleasure in stating, that high satisfaction was felt and expressed by the Court at large, on the prospect of the Company having again the benefit of your services in the territories committed to their charge.'

This measure fixed, another remained to be taken. In the unanimous opinion of all Mr. Thomason's relations and friends before, he revisited India, a marriage with a person in whom proper age, temper, sense, and piety combined, was most expedient. To Miss Dickenson of Liverpool, therefore, in whom all these qualifications centered, he was married with the cordial concurrence of his whole family. Brief indeed was this union, but Mr. Thomason never ceased to be filled with thankfulness to the God of his mercies that it had been contracted.

Before leaving England for ever, Mr. Thomason visited Cambridge, with what effect, as far as India was concerned, may be seen in the following recital of an interview with some young students. It is from the pen of one who was himself present.

‘ During Mr. Thomason's last visit to Cambridge, (1828,) about twenty undergraduates were invited to join a farewell party to him at the Rev. H. Farish's rooms. After breakfast he spent an hour in giving us a view of the preparatory studies, the duties, privations, and joys of a chaplain and of a missionary in India. Most of us, I believe, must date any distinct ideas we may have on the subject, from that conversation. His graphic views of the necessities of India—his statements from experience of the blessedness of the work,

kindled a missionary flame in many; whilst his solemn warnings against secularity of motive, and unadvised hastiness in deciding, were well-fitted to damp any thing of mere animal fervour, or temporary excitement.

‘When about to part, the Rev. W. B—— took his hand and said, ‘Christian brother, we bid you God speed,’ and gave him a parting blessing. Mr. T. shook each of us by the hand, and said, ‘I know not your faces, but I shall be glad to see you in India; or, if not in India, I shall hope to meet and recognize all of you in *that* great day.’

‘Few of us will forget his countenance at the close of our meeting. *Two of the party have since gone to India as chaplains*; but they did not see Mr. Thomason.’

‘As the time approaches, I feel as if I were taking a last farewell, anticipating the hour of death, and the depression is sometimes great. But I clearly see the path of duty. If God be our God, he can and will make up every loss. I desire to make him my dwelling-place, and to expect all happiness and strength from him.’ Such was the utterance of his emotions towards the end of June, 1828, when he was to leave England for ever.

After a parting more trying than that which rent his heart asunder nearly twenty years before, because more certainly *final*, Mr. Thomason commenced his voyage, and in little more than four

months re-entered the scene of his Indian labours. But it was suffering and death, not life and action, that the Lord, whose ways are not as man's ways, appointed.

The following letter which he wrote to his mother from the river Hooghly, shews to what a trial he was subjected, and in what a spirit he was enabled to sustain it. 'Returning as he did to what he considered his post in this place,' Archdeacon Corrie observed in his sermon on his death, 'and finding the Almighty thwarting as it were all his designs, which he had intended for the advancement of divine truth and the salvation of souls in this land, he was at first perplexed and anxious at the meaning of the afflictive dispensation. But by faith and prayer, and self-examination, he was at length enabled to repose in the divine mercy in a Saviour, and attained to a comfortable persuasion, that patience would have its perfect work in him.' Let the readers of this letter to his mother, the last he ever wrote to her, say whether this hope was falsified—what deep workings of humiliation—what strong faith—what love—what submission to the will of his God—what justifying of him in an allotment so grievous to flesh and blood, are manifest! Who can peruse it without exclaiming, 'blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law.'

*River Hooghly, April 7, 1829.*

‘ Whilst proceeding down the river to the Isle of France, let me sit down and give you some tidings of myself in my own handwriting. Almost ever since my arrival, I have been under medical treatment ; having brought a complaint with me, (which proved to be water in the chest) which brought me very low, even to the borders of the grave. My sufferings were great day and night, and the medical attendant had no hope of my recovery. It pleased God, however, in a wonderful manner to bless the means used ; but the process has so emaciated my frame, that it was absolutely necessary I should seek complete restoration by change of climate. A ship being at hand sailing for the Mauritius, preparations were made without loss of time, and we are now on our way down the river. The progress of my convalescence has been astonishing. So great is the goodness of God ! The six worst months in Calcutta, are now beginning ; so that it were impossible, (humanly speaking) for a frame reduced like mine, to gather strength, except by removing to a more bracing air and climate. The doctors are decidedly opposed to my residing any longer in India. Much will depend on the nature and degree of my recovery. If it should please God to raise me up again, I see not why I should

not make another attempt. Yet, at the present moment I find it impossible to decide. May I be directed for the best—and my spared life, wherever spent, (if it be spared) exhibit the fruit of this affliction. Through these painful months I have been much exercised in mind; and when in the near prospect of eternity, could at no time rise to any great joy. *My soul, through the mercy of God, could cast itself upon the Saviour, and there repose.* But Oh! how in the retrospect of my past life, did I see cause to weep; and in what an affecting manner were the sins of my youth and more advanced age set before me! How was I shocked at the foolish chattering, and the defiled superficial statements with which the deep things of God had been handled! Very great and glorious they then appeared to me, and I pray that the impression may be deep and permanent. I seemed to have heard of God only with the hearing of the ear, and now that mine eye saw him more nearly, I abhorred myself. During this whole season of suffering, great was the mercy of God to me. The attendance of my wife and children was most touching; and the keen solicitude expressed by the members of the congregation was soothing to the heart. Though I felt myself to be utterly unworthy of their love, yet I could not but consider it as an evidence that my labour had not been altogether

vain. I could appeal to the heart-searching God, as to the sincerity of my heart, in desiring rather to be taken away at once, than to go on in the same superficial, unprofitable way I had hitherto done. If it please him to restore me to work, I pray that the fruit of this visitation may appear. Little did I think when I last wrote from this neighbourhood, that I should so soon be compelled to retrace my steps. It seemed on reaching the sand heads, and hearing of the state of things, that I had come back to Calcutta in the very moment of time, that nothing could be more seasonable, nothing more indicative of providential guidance; that I was, in short, just the person that was wanted to fill up the gap. *Thou blind fool, said God, go back again, and know that my work wants you not.* So I interpret the providence by which I am sent back from the place to which my heart had clung. God will do his work with hallowed instruments. I pray that he may sanctify and make me meet for his work, and feel that he is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. In the retirement of this cabin, I trust the Lord will deepen his work in my heart. After going so far to unite my son and daughter in marriage, I feared, I quite expected to be removed from them before the ceremony was performed. Two days after, we hastened back to Calcutta, in order that I might

obtain the best medical help. Arrived at Calcutta, I for the first time learned the real nature of my complaint. Though I perceive you become increasingly weak, yet your spirits are supported, and you continue to enjoy in your usual way the manifold blessings of God. Beloved and honoured Mr. Simeon will read this, and pray that my spared life may be consecrated anew to God.'

The voyage to the Mauritius proved beneficial to Mr. Thomason, and she who accompanied him had brighter hopes of his recovery; but when the anchor was dropped at Port Louis, June 7, which proved to be his birth-day, alarms and fears greatly exceeded favourable expectations. For himself, he was 'quietly waiting the Lord's will in a humble, patient, thankful peace of mind, full of praise, yet lying low at the feet of Jesus.' And on Sunday June 21, twelve days after landing in the Isle of France, his earthly tabernacle was dissolved, and his spirit numbered amongst the just made perfect.

'On Saturday morning the 20th.' it is from her pen who watched over him with unremitting tenderness, "his cough and breathing became worse, which intimated that his change was drawing near; he requested me to read the appointed Psalms for the morning, (as was my frequent custom) the first of which being



the 102d, he said, ‘how descriptive of my case.’ On Sunday he had a very suffering day, but his mind was composed, he was quite sensible his end was approaching, and his frequent prayer was for *patience*: yet indeed he was an example of patient suffering: toward the evening I perceived evident signs of approaching dissolution, and therefore requested a Christian friend to be with me at the closing scene; he can bear witness with myself, to the firm faith and strong hope which disarmed death of its sting, and shed a holy quiet and peace around.

‘Many sweet expressions we heard from his dying lips, in the midst of severe bodily agony, such as the following, ‘This is a dark valley, but there’s light at the end.’ “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” ‘Lord give me patience, may patience have its perfect work.’ “When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.” About three o’clock in the morning, he inquired what time it was, and when told, he replied, ‘I thought I should have been far away before this.’ He complained of a sharp pain in his heels, and also at the back of his head, which reminded him of the first great blessed promise vouchsafed to fallen man. He seemed to watch the progress of death as it advanced up his cold

legs. He asked why there was not a candle in the room, on being told there was, he said, 'Oh, then, I am losing my sight, for it appears dark.' After a slight convulsion, I saw his change was near, and said to him, 'The Lord is coming quickly,' he replied with a smile, 'I hope so.' Shortly after this his heart ceased to beat, his spirit fled, and he entered the joy of the Lord.'

'During the voyage from Calcutta to this island, (the narrative proceeds,) a period of nine weeks, in which that season of the year was included, wherein we commemorate our Saviour's Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, he read twice over the Harmony of the Gospels, which, as he intently perused, he frequently said, 'I have been feasting on the bread of life.' He appeared sometimes to be absent from all earthly scenes; so elevated was his soul with meditation on the boundless love of God in Christ, which was heightened by a deep sense of his own vileness: indeed, this characteristic much increased as he ripened for glory: he lamented his great defect in every relative duty, in his ministerial office especially; and in deep humility of heart used to break out in the publican's prayer, and frequently said, 'I cast myself on the boundless mercy of God. I throw myself at my Saviour's feet; if I perish, I perish there.'

'He was very earnest in his petitions at the

throne of grace for the spiritual welfare of India, for the coming of Christ's kingdom, and the fulfilment of those prophecies relating to it. He left an affectionate farewell to those most dear to him, in the following words,—‘To my dearest mother, give my most affectionate love, and may her last days be her best days. To my very dear Mr. Simeon say, I feel unworthy of the great love he has at all times honoured me with. Oh may his bow abide in strength, and may he be, if possible, still more useful in his age.’

After this account of Mr. Thomason's death, and the previous memoir of his life, a delineation of his character may perhaps be superfluous. Let the reader, however, allow the attempt; granting to the writer this concession, *that what he says he honestly believes to be true*. He would not deliberately overcharge a single statement. *He would in fairness turn the medal if he could*. He knew little of Mr. Thomason personally; his acquaintance with him is from letters and friends, from neither of which sources can he obtain any information which in balancing his qualities can be placed on the unfavourable side.

Of one of the Fathers of the Church, it was said, ‘that he thundered in public, and lightened in private.’ Nothing of this kind can be predicated of Mr. Thomason: his excellences were of another description; their lustre was

soft and mild, calculated to attract, rather than to dazzle and confound. Viewed intellectually, his capacity was not an ordinary one: those two sinews of the mind, attention and retention, he possessed in much perfection. His power of acquiring languages, and imbibing science, was remarkable. 'His talents were characterized rather by quickness of apprehension than originality of thought; by a facility in making himself acquainted with discoveries, than by pursuing them to their ultimate results.' Such is Mr. Jerram's gauge of his mental strength, from which few readers, it is conceived, will dissent materially.

For sweetness of temper and simplicity of spirit, he was distinguished. 'There was not a shadow of guile or of artifice in him,' are Mr. Jerram's words—'he was as transparent as glass, his very countenance and manner invited freedom.' This artlessness continued through life in its earliest and freshest fragrancy. With some it is a flower that closes at noon, or droops at least towards evening; with him the petals were expanded, and the odours emitted till his sun went down. This childlike openness may have given rise to misconceptions—it may have furnished a handle to misrepresentations. Yet how preferable, with all its weaknesses and disadvantages, to suspicious reserve or artful concealment! Hilarity

and cordiality of feeling are generally found in this combination—they were so here. Apathy did not chill his affections, nor did gloom settle as a cloud upon his mind. There was in him an uncommon absence of selfish propensities. Generosity was the very sunshine of his soul, irradiating his whole spirit and conduct. To an undue love for money, he had the noblest superiority. With what vivid pleasure did he reimburse the Elland Society, as he repaid also the Evangelical fund in India what had been expended on him, when he arrived in that destitute condition. Sums of no small magnitude he contributed towards orphans, adopting one into his family, and subscribing munificently towards that institution for orphans, of which he was the founder. To all who were desolate and distressed, he was bountiful, not only according to his power, but beyond his power. Were *access* in any thing attributable to him, it would be with respect to his liberality; for so largely did he give, and so little did he save, that the expences of his compulsory and distressing voyage to England very nearly exhausted his funds. Bountifulness is sometimes tarnished by a tenacity for supposed rights, and by a readiness to resent imaginary wrongs. Mr. Thomason was naturally gentle and yielding; when God's grace therefore sanctified and directed this disposition, few were more detached from enmity

in all its modifications. Smarting under the unkindness of a companion in early life, he took the first opportunity of speaking well of him, having found by experience that the *exercise* of kindly feeling tended to sustain and strengthen the *habit*. In later life, when wounded most acutely and undeservedly, having dispatched an account drawn up with great moderation to a confidential friend, he quickly followed it up by a letter expressive of anxiety, lest a word should have been uttered with acrimony. Love towards man was a prominent part of his original temperament; and when this was grafted into that stock of all that is excellent, the love of God in Christ, abundant and delightful fruits were produced. What but this led him so frequently to the houses of the poor, and made the instruction of little children so pleasant to him? What but this exalted his avocations as a student and tutor, and refined as well as augmented his domestic joys? This it was that caused him to excel as a master, a husband, a father, a friend, above all, as a son; *for when did filial piety ever shine more brightly and more constantly than in him?* The principle of divine love it was, that controlled his passions, directed his faculties, and determined the whole man for God. In possession of every earthly gratification at Shelford, when he seemed to hear that voice, "Get thee out

from thy country and thy kindred," his obedience was prompt and unhesitating; without lingering or looking back, he went forth amongst the heathen in the spirit of an evangelist. How patiently did he bear all the trials and discouragements, all the heat and burthen of Indian labour—finding spiritual support in that very work which undermined his constitution, and brought him ultimately to his grave. In heavenly love, truly he resembled those 'trees that are full of sap—even the cedars of Lebanon, which the Lord hath planted,' and those who estimate greatness by that test—'Ille verè magnus est qui magnam habet caritatem'—which, be it remembered, is the scriptural assay, will not refuse him the denomination of a great man. Such a title he himself would have repudiated and disclaimed; for if ever man was humble, he was so—unaffectedly—deeply—increasingly. Those vices which pollute the springs of life, and which impart to the dregs of earthly existence an inexpressible bitterness, he had mercifully escaped; his boyhood was devoted to God—his youth was unspotted—his after life conspicuous for sanctity—yet whose confessions more contrite? whose reliance on the Saviour of the lost more simple? Realizing to his peace and comfort his privileges as a believer in Christ Jesus, he could never forget that he was in himself a being deeply fallen, and

continually offending: aspiring after perfection with his whole heart, he was *on that very account so much the more* conscious that ‘the little fruit he had in holiness,’ accepted as it was of God for Christ’s sake, was *in itself* corrupt, and unsound;’ he ‘challenged nothing for it, he put no trust in it.’ Before man too, as well as God, he was lowly—what undissembled pain in his breast did the union of his own name with that of Henry Martyn on one occasion create! Martyn’s name he thought could not be too honourably and frequently remembered; his own could not be too much disregarded and forgotten. Towards his first diocesan, with whom he did not concur in points of doctrine—his deference was as complete as was consistent with a paramount uncompromising obedience to his own conscience. What he was as a minister, that parting address from his flock at Calcutta, after an experience of his watchful care for seventeen years, declares and *proves*. Jesus Christ the Son of God in all his mediatorial and essential glory, was the grand subject of his preaching from the commencement to the conclusion of his course. As a preacher, no one could be more exempt than he from that sinful morbid appetite for popularity which, however highly esteemed by men, is an abomination in the sight of God. It is affirming much, yet it is no exaggeration to affirm, that he had



not a spark of that *most odious of all hateful corruptions*, MINISTERIAL ENVY. Had any one obtained in his church at Calcutta more acceptance than himself, he would not have been tortured by contemptible jealousies, rather would he have glorified God in the endowments and success of a brother beloved in the Lord. It is almost needless to say, that the externals of a morality *vicious*, because *unprincipled*, the sallies of a vain, corrupt, intrusive imagination, that talk of the lips that tendeth only to penury, the masked pretences of a hypocritical profession, Mr. Thomason spurned as so many forms of godliness without its power. He could well distinguish also, and knew how to press the *fundamental* verities of the everlasting gospel. Practically accordant was his teaching with that admirable exhortation of Baxter<sup>1</sup>—‘If we can teach Christ to our people, we teach them all. Get them well to heaven and they will have knowledge enough. The plainest and most commonly acknowledged truths are what men live most upon: these are the great instruments in destroying sin and raising the heart to God. To remember that one thing is needful will take us off from needless ornaments and unprofitable controversies. Many other things are <sup>desirable</sup> desirable to be known, but these *must* be known, or else our people are undone for ever.

<sup>1</sup> Reformed Pastor.

Necessity should be a great disposer of a minister's studies and labours. If we were sufficient for every thing we might undertake every thing ; but life is short and we are dull. Eternal things are necessary, and the souls that depend on our teaching are precious.' Mr. Thomason fed those committed to his charge with that bread of life—he called them to that water of life—which were the daily sustenance and refreshment of his own soul. Personal and ministerial religion in him were well combined. No one was more vigilant than he in maintaining that due and proper adjustment between devotional meditation and study *within*, and active employment *without*, in the neglect of which, no minister can prosper in his own soul, or in his ministry.

In dealing with those committed to his care, he justly merited that high commendation, 'maluit videri invenisse bonos quam fecisse.' Amongst his people he was gentle as a nurse that cherisheth her own children. Truth in his mouth could not lose its native keenness ; but as employed by him, its edge did not lacerate : its point was sharp but not envenomed. He had no tendency to asperity ; it was foreign to his nature : his danger lay probably in an opposite direction, the fear of displeasing others. Yet so completely in God's strength had he triumphed over himself, that he would not suffer a Governor General of India to

violate the Sabbath without offering a remonstrance ; and continually was he forcing into the light of his conscience the obligations of England to the people of Hindostan. With all his zeal, he was neither precipitate nor pertinacious ; on the contrary, he was prudent and circumspect : witness his adoption of written for extemporaneous discourses, when he thought they awakened prejudice ; and especially his measured caution in all he designed for the benefit of India.

Archdeacon Robinson, in giving to the public the last days of Bishop Heber, records this testimony of the Bishop. <sup>1</sup>

‘ He talked this evening much about Thomason, for whom he has a high respect and regard. He frequently mentions the difficulty, the impossibility of supplying his place in Calcutta, in the pulpit, in the schools, in the study, and (which he thinks in the present fermenting state of public feeling in the church more important than any) in that *general pervading influence of his just and steady judgment* in the members who are personally attached to him.’

The rank he occupied as an oriental scholar and translator of the Scriptures was very high. In Persian, Arabic, Hindoostanee, and Hebrew above all, his erudition has seldom been surpassed ;

<sup>1</sup> See Last Days of Bishop Heber.

and in effecting a version of the greater portion of the Old Testament into one of the most widely diffused languages of the East, in proclaiming the truth as it is in Jesus in season and out of season ; fulfilling gladly the ministry he had received, he consecrated his time and talents to what he justly deemed the sublimest ends. Had all the distinctions that stimulate the exertions of the ambitious, that crown their efforts, inflate their imaginations, or colour their dreams, been within his grasp, he would have accounted them as the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, the foam upon the wave, compared with the unmerited honour of being allowed and enabled by God to be a messenger of mercy to mankind ; an instrument of communicating the word of life to myriads in the region of the shadow of death.

What Mr. Thomason performed could not have been accomplished, had not his mind been impressed with the solemn and habitual recollection, that "*opportunity is the flower of time ;*" and that the moments as they passed should be redeemed for God. Even when at school, such was his diligence and self-denial, that he would save the slender pittance of his pocket money to buy oil that he might read Hebrew in the evening, and whatever he undertook in after life was done in fervency of spirit for the honour of God. That '*inertiæ dulcedo*' which is so fascinat-

ing and so deadly, either for him had slight allurements, or they were fully overcome. No loiterer was he in his sacred vocation: he was the very opposite; a labourer, cheerful, patient, persevering, his heart lifted up to the Lord—his hand upon the plough—his eye on the furrow. And now in the presence of the Lord of the harvest, he reaps the blissful fruit of his unwearied labours, angels and the redeemed rejoicing in his joy, and all with one accord ascribing incessant praises to the God of grace and glory.

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